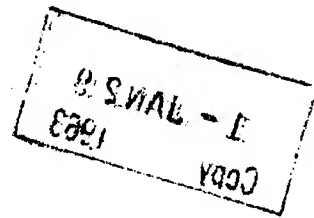


THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



CONCEPTIONS OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT  
AS DEVELOPED AMONG THE UNIVERSALISTS

A DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND LITERATURE  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY  
IN THE GRADUATE DIVINITY SCHOOL

BY  
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JUNE, 1925

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12 June 12-73

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## INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this work to set forth in an orderly manner the denials of endless punishment which brought into being the Universalist Church, to trace the varying and at one period conflicting views of future punishment thus produced, through the period of controversy and down to the present time.

In pursuit of this aim, the successive thinkers have been largely allowed to speak for themselves in the following pages, and at such length that their basic attitudes may be as clear to the careful reader as is needful for the proper appreciation and valuation of their ideas on future punishment.

# CONCEPTIONS OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT AS DEVELOPED AMONG THE UNIVERSALISTS

## I

### THE DENIAL OF ENDLESS PUNISHMENT. 1770-1805.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century there were in European countries, and to some extent in America, scattered individuals who believed that there was no endless hell. The arguments against it were various, and wholly independent in their origin. The first congregation gathered together on the grounds of final universal restoration was that assembled by the Rev. James Rally, in London. From his congregation came the man who gave the initial impetus to the spread of such beliefs in America - John Murray.

Every sentence expressing belief in, or even hope in universal salvation on whatever grounds, from whatever source, has already been gathered up by Universalist historians. It needs not to be done again. For the purposes of this study, the reader will obtain sufficient knowledge of the opinions current in that early period from a knowledge of the opinions which went into the formation of the separate group calling themselves Universalists, and a knowledge of the origins of these opinions, for they are broadly and sufficiently representative.

## CHAPTER I.

### MURRAY'S Denial of Endless Punishment

John Murray was not an original thinker. While living in London, he read Rally's Union, with a view to helping to refute it. He was greatly impressed, went to hear him, and was soon as fervent a disciple as he had formerly been of Wesley and of Whitefield. In 1770, he came to America

strong in Relly's theory of universal salvation. A later theologian, having at hand Relly's Union, gives the following outline of its theology, original with Relly.

"It is well known that the Universalism which arose here, as a distinct system of faith, came from England....In respect to its peculiar form, the Universalism, thus introduced, was an offshoot from the high Calvinism of the Whitefield school, to which Mr. Relly, as well as his disciple Mr. Murray, once belonged, and in which the religious sentiments of both had been fashioned. (This is abundantly proven in the opening chapters of the Life of Rev. John Murray, by himself, edition of 1882). As all mankind, according to the old creed, sinned in Adam, and incurred eternal damnation by his fall, and as Christ bore this infinite punishment and guilt in behalf of those who shall be saved, Relly thought it requisite to find some ground of justice in such an economy. How was such a transfer of sin and its penalty consistent with the terms of God's law, which explicitly declared that 'the soul which sinneth, it shall die', and that the innocent should not suffer for the guilty? or how was it reconcilable with equity? It could not be accounted for on the ground merely of the divine Sovereignty, that is, without regard to inherent justice in the case; because, if God's Absoluteness could set justice aside, it might, of course, have gone straight to its aim by remitting the whole penalty at once, instead of transferring it. Nor would it do to say that the sufferings of Christ were only ACCEPTED as a satisfaction for man's offence, only RECKONED as such, by God's sovereign pleasure; because, according to this, they were not in themselves an adequate satisfaction; and, moreover, any sufferings whatsoever, even those of a mere man, might as well have been thus arbitrarily accepted; so that there would have been no need of selecting, as the victim, an infinite person of the Godhead. There must be a perfect consistency with eternal justice, in the arrangement. This consistency Relly found, in such a thorough "Union" of Christ with the human race, as made their acts his, and his theirs. As all mankind were somehow present in the first Adam, and really sinned in him, not by a fictitious imputation but by actual participation; so, all men were really contained in Christ, "the second Adam", "the Head of every man"; and he was, therefore, as justly accountable for their doings, as the head, in a natural body, is accountable for the deeds of the inferior members. In his corporate capacity, as containing them, he was truly guilty of their offence. Accordingly, he was justly punished for it; and they again, being his members, really suffered in him the infinite penalty he endured and thus paid up their own debt. The law, now, has no demands on them, or, which is the same thing, on him; and there is no occasion for preaching its terrors at all, nor even for enjoining its commands, except to make us feel our inability to obey them, and thus compel us to rely exclusively on the obedience of Christ our Head. The law, which condemns, is superseded by the gospel, which declares the complete and finished justification of the whole world. We must, however, believe this fact, in order to be freed from the sense of guilt and from fear. All are perfectly righteous in Christ, through whom alone God regards them; though, in themselves, all are totally depraved, and helpless in their sin. Such was the 'Union' which Relly held. He proved it by the literal, and often laughable, construction of numerous texts, and illustrated it by the supposed allegories

of the Mosaic rituals. If the scheme be but a series of mere verbal fictions, we should still remember that it is no more so than was the old popular system from which it came, and that it even had superior merit, not only as more complete, but as an attempt to maintain the sacredness of moral equity in the divine administration. In Rely's work, it is often argued with no small degree of acuteness.

This was the scheme, in general, to which Murray devoted his ministry. We need not show that it must have had great charms for such minds as were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the recent New-light doctrines, and of Whitefield's preaching. Accordingly, wherever Murray went, the devouter part of his admirers appears to have been of this class, including the Separatists, the high Calvinistic Baptist, etc., though a few of his warm friends were among those who had stood aloof from the late excitements, and who had formed perhaps no very definite system of religious faith.<sup>1</sup>

To this system Murray gave unequivocal and lifelong assent, and publicity here in America. Arriving here entirely unknown, he was persuaded to preach on his first Sunday. His acquaintance widened rapidly, and for several years he journeyed up and down New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, along the coast line, preaching by invitation in one place after another. He was invited to settle as pastor in several places, but declined, knowing that his doctrines were not precisely what they thought. In some places, he was detected as having departed from true Calvinism on his first visit, in others, not till his second; in any case, the definite knowledge of his system, whenever it became known, caused uproar. He has left us the following record of his methods during this critical period.

"Many blessed God that they had seen and heard me; and all this I imputed to a want of knowledge, relative to the extent of the glad tidings I promulgated. The grace, union, and membership upon which I expatiated, were admitted by every Calvinist, but admitted only for the elect; and when I repeated these glorious texts of Scripture, which indisputably proclaim the redemption of the lost world, - as I did not expressly say, My brethren, I receive these texts in the unlimited sense in which they are given, - they were not apprized that I did not read them with the same contracted views to which they had been accustomed. When they became assured of the magnitude and unbounded result which I ascribed to the birth, life, and death of the Redeemer, their doors were fast closed against me. For myself, I was in union

1. Hosea Ballou, II: Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America. Universalist Quarterly, Jan. 1848, pp. 81-83

with Mr. Rely, who supposed the gradual dawn of light would eventually prove more beneficial to mankind than the sudden burst of meridian day. Thus I was contented with proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus, in Scripture language only, - leaving to my hearers deductions, comments, and applications."<sup>1</sup>

"One capital difficulty, which has encompassed me in my progress through this younger world, has been the extreme reluctance of inquirers to receive their answers in Scripture language. Standing alone, I have sought to wrap myself, or rather to intrench myself, in the sacred testimony of my God, and for this I have been accused of prevarication, equivocation, and what not, merely because I have not generally chosen to garb my sentiments in my own words. For example: the interrogator commences with a great many compliments, and then follows, 'Do you believe all men will finally be saved?' - 'I believe it is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come into the knowledge of the truth.' - 'But do you yourself believe that all mankind will finally be saved?' - 'God hath included all in unbelief that he may have mercy upon all.' - 'But will all finally be saved?' - 'God hath spoken of the restitution of all things, by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began.'.....This mode, however, has rarely given satisfaction."<sup>2</sup>

Yet occasionally he makes a clean breast of it at the outset, according to his own story.<sup>3</sup>

After four years of such itinerant preaching, he found a group of people in Gloucester, Massachusetts, who had read and accepted Rely's "Union" and became their pastor. Thus was established the first church in America based on the denial of endless punishment. For many years Murray continued to preach his doctrine, more openly as he gathered supporters, in Gloucester, later in Boston, and intermittently at many other places, till the infirmities of old-age overtook him.

Murray's preaching covers a wide range, yet has little depth. We find passages which state his doctrine scattered all through the letters and notes of sermons which he collected in later years.

"Holiness is perfection. In the present state of things, the people of God are unquestionably imperfect; they are in themselves decidedly unholy... Yet the family of man, although depraved and polluted, were beloved by their

1. Life of Rev. John Murray, by himself, p. 287-8

2. Ibid. pp. 292-3

3. Ibid. pp. 262ff

God, so much beloved that he gave them his Son, and as, in this Son, it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, in giving unto the people this son, he gave them himself. Every record, both in the law and in the gospel, combines to assure us for what purpose this arrangement was made, that the people of God might be saved from their sins, that their transgressing might be taken away in and by Christ Jesus, that individual members might be presented in their head, without spot and blameless, and that they might ultimately be without sin, even in their own characters."<sup>1</sup>

"When I see the same materials that were on the breastplate, with the names of the children of Israel, placed also upon the shoulders of their high Priest; when I follow this figure to the New Testament and behold the lost nature upon the shoulders of the true high Priest of our profession, carried home rejoicing; when I hear the Redeemer calling upon those whom he met on his return, to rejoice with him inasmuch as he had found that which was lost; when I consider that our Emmanuel ultimately lost nothing, (if we except the son of perdition); a view of this consistent plan, of this complete whole, satisfies my understanding, and my soul magnifies the Lord and rejoices in his finished salvation."<sup>2</sup>

But the bulk of his discourses are of more fanciful construction.

Hosea Ballou II, summarizes as follows:

"It would be difficult to give an idea of his public discourses, they were so extempore in their character, and so full of unexpected far-fetched combinations. No man ever exceeded him in rapidly weaving together a web of texts, connected only by the slightest verbal relations; no man ever felt more confident, than he, of the validity of such workmanship. Often he but allegorizes a scriptural incident or circumstance, that supplied him with a few slender threads, which grew, under his dexterous manufacture, into the complete garment of universal salvation. The text, 'Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron, thy brother, for glory and beauty, denoted that Christ is our high priest, typified by Aaron; that his garments are all mankind, for he clothed himself without nature; that we are all holy in him, for he is made unto us wisdom, sanctification, and redemption; and finally that his garments, or all mankind, shall be glorious and beautiful.....Sometimes, again, he reasons on general principles, from the character of God, and the force of moral considerations. This, however, is but seldom, his arguments being usually a species of mere dialectics.....His manner of interpreting Scripture was very extraordinary....Like Remy, he sees Christ embodying all men in himself, everywhere in the Bible. In this verse of the 49th Psalm, 'Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?' it is Christ who speaks, meaning by his heels all mankind, who were his lower members; accordingly, it was his heel, the heel of the woman's Seed, which the Serpent was to bruise, - that is, mankind....Noah sent forth a raven from the ark; the ark was Christ, containing us, and the raven was our uncleanness which he put away, - the raven being an unclean bird. These are but specimens

1. Letters and Sketches of Sermons, Vol. III, p. 18

2. Ibid. p. 24



of his interpretations. He also seems to have adopted Rally's rule, to apply to Christ every text in which anything good is attributed to men. Thus, all the beatitudes, ...are spoken only of Christ....for none but Christ answered this description.....In the use of this rule, however, he was by no means consistent. They who had 'done good, and should come forth to the resurrection of life; were the believers, who might be said, in a qualified sense, to have done good.'<sup>1</sup>

Examples of such exegesis cover many pages of the only collection of his notes and writings in existence. We turn with a sense of relief to a pamphlet published by Mr. Murray in 1791, because it gives his thought in the best form now available. We quote as follows:

"The Scriptures give an account of a just God who, in the law which he gave by Moses, denounces death and the curse of the law upon every who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them; but in the same Scriptures we have an account of the same God, manifested in the flesh, as the head of every man made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, being made a curse for them; and this revelation is that gospel which is glad tidings to every child of Adam....

The Scriptures speak of a judgment past and a judgment yet to come. The past judgment is, first, where the world was judged in the second Adam, according to the testimony of the Saviour, 'Now is the judgment of this world; now is the prince of this world cast out,' and death executed upon them, according to the righteous judgment of God. Secondly, everyone taught of God judges himself, and therefore he shall not be judged. Judge yourselves and ye shall not be judged. The judgment to come is that last great day, when all who have not judged themselves, all unbelievers of the human race, and all the fallen angels, through whose influence unbelievers are held in a state of darkness and blindness, and who, as the deceivers of mankind, are reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day; these shall then all be judged by the Saviour of the World. But the angelic and the human sinners shall then be separated, the one shall be placed on the right, the other on the left hand; the one addressed as the sheep, for whose salvation the Redeemer laid down his life; the other as the accursed, whose nature he passed by. The human nature, as the offspring of the everlasting Father, and the ransomed of the Lord, shall by divine power be brought into the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world; the angelic nature will be sent into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.....

But in the future judgment, believers in Jesus Christ who have judged themselves shall not be judged. Judge yourselves, saith the Holy Spirit, and you shall not be judged; but the rest of mankind will be the subjects of this judgment when our Saviour shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire,

1. Hosea Ballou II, Universalist Quarterly, Jan. 1848, p. 86-9

taking vengeance on them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel; and they shall then be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power; the consequence of which shall be, that they shall then be made to know God, and obey the gospel; for, although until this period they will, as unbelievers, suffer the punishment consequent on the revelation of everlasting destruction, yet it is not said they shall be everlastingly punished with destruction,....

Neither in life nor in death, in the body nor out of the body, can any of the ransomed of the Lord be saved from misery until they are made acquainted with God as their Saviour; and although in death the spirit does not descend with the body into the dust, and must be under the eye of the Father of spirits; yet where Christ is, that is, in fulness of joy, they never can be till they have peace and joy in believing. He who dies in unbelief lies down in sorrow, and will rise to the resurrection of damnation, or more properly, condemnation. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound; it is they, and they only, that walk in the light of God's countenance.... These, and these only, have part in the first resurrection, on whom the second death can have no power. These, in the resurrection, shall meet their Saviour with transport; they shall rise to the resurrection of salvation; they shall come to Zion with songs; they shall rejoice; while the many, who are nevertheless redeemed, yet unacquainted with the things which make for their peace, and who rise in the second resurrection, shall be filled with anguish. It is from these unhappy, despairing beings that the Lord God will wipe away all tears; it is from these benighted beings that the hand of divine benignity shall take away the veil. Tears, weeping and wailing will continue as long as unbelief, the procuring cause, shall remain. These evils will be done away together, not in the article of death, but in the day of the Lord, when every eye shall see and every tongue shall confess to the glory of the Father...

The truth is, Jesus is even now the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe; all that was necessary, on God's part, for the complete salvation of all men, was finished when Jesus accomplished what the prophets prophesied of him, saying, 'He shall finish transgression; he shall make an end of sin; he shall make reconciliation for iniquities, and shall bring in everlasting righteousness.' Nothing more is now necessary, than for God to say, 'Let there be light!' and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he can cause such a change to pass on his purchased possession as shall make them like unto their glorified head. Yes, by a single word, he can, by the mighty power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, change even these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body. Why the Saviour does not do this now, I know not, any more than I know why he did not assume our nature a thousand years sooner than he did; or why he suffers any to pass out of this state of existence, unacquainted with him as their Saviour, living all their lifetime in bondage to the fear of death. All I can, all I ought to say, is, that the Judge of all the earth does right, and will continue to do right. The Election obtains, in this their day, the knowledge of the things that make for their peace, and the rest are blinded. But we rest in full assurance that the period will come when every eye shall see, when the face of the covering shall be taken from all people, and the veil from all nations; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord;



when they shall all know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them; and to know God is life eternal."<sup>1</sup>

Murray's wife, a member of his old church in Gloucester, and an unusually intelligent and gifted woman, in finishing after his death the story of his life which he had left incomplete, gives a brief summary of his theology, which she herself heartily espoused and thoroughly understood. In part, it is as follows:

"He believed that the creation of human beings made a part of the divine purpose; in which sacred, uncontrollable, and irreverable purpose, the **WHOLE FAMILY OF MAN** were originally and intimately united to their august Creator, in a manner **MYSTERIOUS**, and as much beyond our limited conception as the Creator is superior to the creature whom he hath formed.

Adam the first was a figure of Adam the second. Adam the first, the prototype; Adam the second, the substance of the prototype, the Creator of all worlds, the Lord from heaven. The sacred Scriptures abound with figures of this mysterious, this ennobling, this soul-satisfying **UNION**; among which perhaps none is more expressive than that of the **HEAD** and **MEMBERS** constituting one body, of which Jesus Christ was the immaculate Head. Hence the propriety and necessity of looking with a single eye to Jesus Christ. We are members of the body of Christ, who is the head of every man. Should a single member of this mystical body be finally lost, the Redeemer must, through eternity, remain imperfect.

A law was given, to the complete obedience of which everlasting life was annexed; but no individual member was ever able to fulfil this Head, that was furnished with abilities adequate to a performance of such vast magnitude. Yea, verily, we do indeed break the divine law, in thought, in word, and in deed, and the lip of truth declares, he who offends in one point is guilty of all.

Why, then, was the commandment so exceeding broad? To convince mankind of imbecility; and that the rectitude they had forfeited could never, in their own individual characters, be regained. But the plan of Deity was without an error; the revolution of time ushered in the great Representative, or, more properly speaking, the Head of the body; and the forfeit was paid, full atonement was presented, the ransom given, and in this hour of Nature's Jubilee, the prodigal family restored to their original possessor.

To make this truth manifest was the great business of our promulgator. He was convinced that only he who believed could be saved; and that he who believed not was indubitably damned. Hence he has frequently said, **HE DID NOT BELIEVE IN UNIVERSAL SALVATION**, because he saw the majority of mankind were **NOT SAVED**. But he was a firm believer in Universal Redemption; because that  
1. Eddy: Universalism in America, Vol. I, pp. 359-379, passim

sacred volume, which he steadfastly and unwaveringly believed to be the word of God, assured him the price was paid, and the whole human family was redeemed.

It was the neglecting to distinguish between salvation and redemption, which so frequently drew upon the preacher the charge of prevarication, or, as it was termed by Mr. Croswell, hiding. An article of intelligence may be an established fact; it may most importantly affect us; but so long as the mind refuses to admit its authenticity, we are undeniably subjected to all those agonizing apprehensions which we should endure if no such fact existed. And it was the salvation from these mental sufferings which Mr. Murray supposed consequent upon a preached gospel; in other words, an exemption from those tortures, that consciousness of condemnation which is most emphatically described when it is said, He who believeth not, is, or shall be damned.

Yet it is an established truth, that every believer was once an unbeliever; every believer, then, was once damned, and it was only when he became a believer that he was saved from those countless agonies, which erst time pierced him through with many sorrows. But he was redeemed, the price was paid ere ever he was called into existence. Thus, in this view, redemption and salvation are distinct considerations.

The preacher unhesitatingly believed, all who learned of the Father would come to Jesus, and that all would finally be taught of God. He was a decided believer in the doctrine of angels of light, and angels of darkness, of ministering spirits of light, and of demons stimulating to deeds of darkness. He looked forward to a judgment to come, when countless numbers among the children of men would rise to the resurrection of damnation, and ignorant of the genuine character of the Redeemer, would call upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb; and, believing himself a humble instrument in the hand of God, ordained by him to the ministry of reconciliation, he was never so completely happy as when declaring the gospel to be believed; and calling upon men everywhere to receive the glad tidings of salvation. He was persuaded that those who laid down in sorrow would continue unhappy wanderers, until the opening of that book, in which every human being, every member of Christ, was written; yet he had no idea of any purgation for sin, save what was suffered by Christ Jesus, who, by himself, purged our sins. Writing of Mr. Winchester to a friend, Mr. Murray thus expressed himself: "Mr. Winchester is full with Mr. Law, and of course preaches purgatorial satisfaction. According to these gentlemen, every man must finally be his own Saviour! If I must suffer as much in my own person as will satisfy divine justice, how is or can Christ Jesus by my Saviour? If this purgatorial doctrine be true, the ministry of reconciliation committed to the apostles must be false; to wit, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses'. In fact, I know no persons further from Christianity, genuine Christianity, than such Universalists.'

Mr. Murray supposed the inquietude of unembodied or departed spirits a natural effect derived from a cause. As unbelievers, they cannot see the things which belong to their peace; but he greatly rejoiced that, however at present enveloped in darkness, there were, and are, things that did and

do belong to their peace; that the day cometh, when whatsoever is hid shall be revealed; and that at the period of the restitution of all things, the word, the oath of Jehovah was pledged, that every eye should see and every tongue confess. The preacher was persuaded that a few eyes in the present dispensation were elected out of the world to embrace the truth previous to their passing out of time. These judging themselves, are, therefore, not to be judged. Saints of God, they shall surround the Redeemer at his second coming, or be caught up in the air to meet the God-Man; after which the whole world shall be summoned at the imperial bar of the Sire of angels and of men, the Creator of all worlds. That a separation will then take place; the Judge, the Redeemer, will divide them as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats; will separate every individual from that body of sin and death of which Paul complained, being burdened; from that fallen spirit which attaches to every individual in such sort as to the man among the tombs, rendering it a truth, that he who sleepeth apparently alone upon his bed is, nevertheless, still connected with his tormentor, and will so continue until this glorious day of separation and of restitution; when these two shall be separated one from another, the one taken, the other left. The fallen angels, figured by the goats, shall be ranged on the left hand, while the harassed human nature, redeemed by the God who created it, shall be found on the right hand of the Most High. Thus, after the world is judged out of the things written in the books; after they are found guilty before God, and every mouth is stopped, the BOOK OF LIFE SHALL BE OPENED, IN WHICH ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE REDEEMER EVERY INDIVIDUAL OF THE HUMAN FAMILY, SHALL BE FOUND WRITTEN; and the ransomed of the Lord shall be declared denizens of that kingdom where dwelleth felicity uninterrupted.<sup>1</sup>

It appears from the foregoing that Murray was in harmony with his Calvinistic contemporaries in his general conception of the nature and work of Christ, of the nature and use of the Bible, of the depraved and helpless character of mankind. His conception of God, fundamentally Calvinistic, was slightly altered by the kindly light shed back upon Him by the ultimate benevolence of the system Murray imputed to Him. His scheme of salvation, centering about the argument that the union of Christ with all men was effective, independent of men's awareness of it or acceptance of it, for their redemption, is a radical departure from Calvinism. It is as follows:

1. Redemption by Christ. Christ is the Head of all of us. He and we are united, this fact having been accomplished in his entering our human nature, taking it upon himself, thus becoming our Head forever. By his death

1. Life of Rev. John Murray, by himself. From the concluding chapters, written by Mrs. Murray, his wife. Edition of 1832, pp. 399-403

he redeemed all men, in that he by perfect obedience to the law of God, enabled us to appear in his obedience and righteousness before God, the union being such that his righteousness mechanically and inevitably becomes ours. Thus by Christ all men are redeemed.

2. The condition of the redeemed man. He violates the divine law, i.e. he sins, but all he does in violation of the act of God has already been atoned for, more than paid for, in Christ our Head. Hence in actual living, he need not consider the matter of sin, and, whether he knows it or not, he is redeemed.

3. Punishment. There being no personal responsibility for sin, there is of course no penalty attached, further than that already paid, the whole penalty, in the work of Christ. There is no punishment yet due to man vindicatory of God's moral government of the world, His dignity and justice, for that is accomplished once for all by Christ. There is no punishment which is corrective or remedial, because Murray's view of sin was still technical and legal, rather than psychological and moral. There is no punishment which is consequential, for the same reason. Murray realized that unbelief had its unhappy consequences, inevitable, in the very nature of unbelief, but not endless. Yet so long as belief depended upon election in his mind, the unbelievers are not personally responsible for their blindness, and their sufferings in consequence are not punishment for sin, though the description of them sounds very analogous to our modern teaching on sin and punishment. There being no responsibility for sin on the part of men, even though they do sin, there is naturally no punishment where there is no guilt or liability.

4. Salvation. Since all men are truly redeemed, and in good standing with God, their ultimate salvation and happiness is a matter of time

and revelation, and is certain, because there is not any justice in condemning any man who is perfect in Christ, and all are thus perfect. Christ has indeed done the full work, has redeemed the whole human family in himself, and God, recognizing this, has arranged that the full work should come to perfect fruition in the salvation of all. The happiness of conscious harmony with God is salvation. This requires faith, i.e. knowledge, on the part of each man. Some get it in this life, and some are not able to, but will obtain it in the last judgment, at which culminating event they will discover that they have from the beginning been fully justified in the sight of God through Christ. This knowledge is all that is needful to put and to keep the human soul in absolute harmony with God.

## CHAPTER. II

## Winchester's Denial of Endless Punishment.

Another approach was made by the Rev. Elhanan Winchester, a Calvinist Baptist preacher of much greater mental capacity, than Mr. Murray. He tells in his preface to the second edition of The Universal Restoration the story of his change of belief.

"I think it was in the beginning of the year 1778, being in South Carolina...where I was at that time minister, that I called to see a friend, who first put into my hands that valuable book written by Paul Siegvolk, and which is called 'The Everlasting Gospel'.... I opened the book as I was desired, and dipping into it here and there for half an hour perhaps was very soon able to tell what the author aimed at, namely, that there would be a final end of sin and misery, and that all fallen creatures would be restored by Jesus Christ to a state of holiness and happiness; after such as were rebellious had suffered in proportion to their crimes. I had never seen anything of the sort before in all my life; and I seemed struck with several ideas that I glanced over, - such as the inconsistency and impossibility of both good and evil always existing in the universe; and especially his observations upon the word eternal or everlasting, showing that it was used for what never had a beginning and would never have an end, as the being and perfections of God; and that it was also applied to things which had a beginning but should never have an end, - as the being and happiness of the righteous; and that it was also frequently used to express things, times, and seasons, which had both beginning and end, which he therefor called periodical eternities, and gave a great many instances of this sort which could not be denied; and he contended that the everlasting punishment threatened to the wicked, did not belong to the first nor to the second, but to the third class of these durations.....I laid the book down, and I believe we both concluded it to be a pleasant, ingenious hypothesis,....<sup>1</sup>

1. From an edition of the Everlasting Gospel published in Cincinnati, in 1815, we obtain an outline of this important work. (It was probably written in low Dutch, soon translated into German, and almost certainly brought over to America by the Mennonites, who circulated it here in English. The edition which Thomas Whittemore had before him, in 1829, was dated "Germantown, 1753". From Whittemore: Modern History of Universalism, pp. 123-128, footnotes) The first chapter gives the foundation of the whole thought in its very title, "God, in his word, describes himself as the everlasting essential LOVE, and the result thereof". The second chapter shows that the "wrath and punishing justice of God is, as all other divine attributes, nothing else than God's essential love". The third chapter sets forth that "Everything what GOD will, must absolutely be fulfilled at last; and what is to be concluded from it". In the fourth chapter it is argued that God and evil, being of contrary nature, cannot both be of endless duration. In the fifth chapter it is argued that



In the year 1779 I found myself much stirred up to exhort my fellow creatures to repent, believe, and obey the gospel.... I felt great

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even the fallen angels will be restored at last, because of their essential angelic nature, which God loves forever. The sixth chapter is headed, "Of the everlasting validity and efficacy of the merits of Christ, and the eternal Redemption found out by him; and that the same is infinitely more powerful than all sin and corruption springing from sin." The seventh chapter is "Of the word eternity, and the different eternities mentioned in the scriptures", and the next, "To which sort of eternities the eternity of the evil, and the punishment depending thereon, or eternal damnation, as it is called, belongs".

The ninth chapter is "Of the different sorts or degrees of damnations that is, of the first and second death, or of the prisons of the sea, death, and hell, and of the fiery lake". Bodily death, which is the first death, means "with respect to believers, a passage from death unto the true and really eternal life; a putting off of all mortality, or a perfect deliverance from the body of death", and "with respect to the wicked and unbelievers, we may by rights call it, a passage out of one miserable land of death into another which is much more miserable and terrible". "The woful regions of the first death must contain several prisons.... And the difference of these places of confinement designed for the wicked after their departure out of this world (one being doubtless worse than the other) is grounded on the different degrees of their iniquity, where every convict will be ordered by the righteous Judge of all flesh to a prison of death proportionable to his crime." "The second death, following the first, is the most wretched, most woful, and most unhappy condition of evil men and angels lying under the dominion of sin and the wrath of God, in the fiery lake, whom no foregoing judgments of the first death have been able to tame, and who therefore, according to their last doom, must receive the full measure of their well deserved punishments, be absolutely excluded from all grace and mercy of God during all that very terrible long eternity wherein the anger of the Most High is to burn over them, be as unclean dogs cast out of the palace of heaven's king, and entirely forsaken of God and all creatures, as Christ was on the cross."

The tenth chapter is "Of the different degrees of eternal glory; or, of the first-birth and after-birth to salvation". The first-born are those who were believers on earth, who will reign with Christ. The after-born are of two groups, those after-born out of the first death, and the remainder who are after-born out of the second. "The after-born out of the first death are, as aforesaid, those deceased who, after the blessed thousand years of Christ's marriage, at the very last judgment, will be given up by the sea, death, and hell, be found written in the book of life, and so through the endless mercy of God be saved from the second death, and from its full power over them, though the ideas thereof have been torment enough to them in the prisons of the first death...."

The after-born out of the second death are all the rest of mankind,

compassion towards them, and invited them with all my might to fly for mercy to the arms of Christ, who died for them, and who was willing to save them...

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and the fallen angels, who, under all the foregoing dreadful judgments of the first death, did continue in their wickedness, and therefore must be humbled in the fiery lake, by the most horrible and consummate judgments of the second death, to bow at last every one of them their knees before Christ, and so to have their share too in the eternal redemption found out by him.

That there may be a difference again between these after-born out of the second death, as to the time of their restoration, seems very probable by what is said Rev. XX, 10 compared with verse 15 as also chap. XII, 8....

The very last of all that will be restored are the sinners against the Holy Ghost, and the seducers of the whole race of man, to wit, Lucifer with his angels; these will be obliged to remain prisoners under the Divine wrath, without remission of sin, during the whole eternity or age of Christ's reign with his own in the world to come, and, through God's just judgment, shall not be restored than at that point of time, or just before it, when the future world is to be changed into that still or silent eternity, wherein God is to be all in all, after everything in its order and harmony, has been subdued unto him by Christ.

Although these after-born to salvation, who, in due season, by Christ, the universal Saviour, will be delivered both from the first and second death, will also....receive a blessing with Esau, and partake of some beatitude,;...yet they will be excluded to allendless eternity from the above-said glories, peculiar to the first-born, namely, from the reigning with Christ, and the celestial priesthood, both during the aforesaid blessed thousand years, and all the succeeding eternities of eternities; and thus, in some measure, undergo an absolutely endless punishment,....However so, that at last, having sufficiently regretted their irreparable loss, they will be very well content with that share of salvation which the infinite grace of God, for Jesus Christ's...sake, will give them; rejoice at the far more exceeding weight of glory of the first-born, and to the utmost humble themselves both before them and their Head Jesus Christ.

Chapter eleven tells "what the scripture meaneth by this present world, the world to come, and the still, or silent eternity". The twelfth chapter gives the clearest scripture passages promising a general restoration, and the closing chapter deals with the moral influence of this doctrine.

The resemblance between this system of doctrine, and that of Winchester, so far as we know the latter's teachings, is very marked.



This summer I received some farther dawns of the day of the general restoration in my mind, for upon considering several Scriptures, such as Isa. 53:11, Rev. 7:9, I became fully persuaded that the number of the finally saved would equal, if not exceed, the number of the lost. And I was so forcibly impressed with this new and very joyful discovery, that I not only conversed in that strain privately, but boldly preached it in the congregation,....

In this state of mind, half a convert to the doctrine of the Restoration, I arrived in the city of Philadelphia,...1780.... Soon after I arrived in that city I had inquired of some friends for 'The Everlasting Gospel', which I could not light on for some time, but they lent me Mr. Stonehouse's book upon the 'The Restitution of All Things', which I had never seen nor heard of before. This very learned work I read with great care, and his reasoning, arguments, and Scripture proof seemed to me entirely satisfactory.....<sup>1</sup>

1. Whittmore, in Modern History of Universalism, pp. 235-9, comments thus: "For learning, for an elaborate defence of Universalism, and in respect to the time in which he lived, Sir George Stonehouse may be ranked with Bishop Newton. He was educated at Oxford. His mind was very early impressed with the conviction of the truth of Universal Restitution; but by what particular means this was first called to his attention, we have no means of knowing....

He issued, at different times three works on the subject of Universal Restitution. The first, above named, (Universal Restitution vindicated) is a series of letters on the nature and extent of Christ's kingdom, and on the present fallen condition of mankind. He commences with some very judicious observations on the true sense of the words *oien* and *aion*, and the distinction between them and *kosmos*, all promiscuously rendered world; by which he shows that *aion* ought not so to have been rendered, in the sense which the word world usually bears. In regard to his general subject he says, "what I have to advance upon this great truth, the Restitution of all things, will be drawn mostly from two considerations: 1. From a consideration of the kingdom of God to be established by divine management in the person of the God-man Christ Jesus; and 2. from a consideration of the present fallen nature and disposition of the creature; but more immediately of the human soul."

The work entitled 'Universal Restitution farther defended' is naturally divided into two parts. In the first, those passages which are relied on to disprove Universalism are taken up and explained; and in the second the proofs of that doctrine are given. These the author draws, 1. from the avowed purpose or counsel of Christ to restore all men. 2. From his express promise so to do. 3. From the expressions revealing and proclaiming the efficacy of the redeeming price paid for all men. 4. From the declared will of Christ to have all men restored. And 5. from his declared ability to effect the restitution of all men.

It is a difficult matter to give an exact description of these

I now foresaw the storm, and I determined to prepare for it, ... by examining and determining for myself whether the sentiment was according to Scripture or not....For this purpose I shut myself up chiefly in my chamber, read the Scriptures, and prayed to God to lead me into all truth.... let it suffice, in short, to say that I became so well persuaded of the truth of the Universal Restoration, that I was determined never to deny it, let it cost ever so much....

Accordingly, on the 22d day of April, I preached a sermon on Gen. 3:15, in which I openly asserted the doctrine of the final and Universal Restoration of all fallen intelligences. This was published by particular desire...."1

From a footnote at this point of Eddy's work, we gather the following:

"The title of the sermon is: "The Seed of the Woman bruising the Serpent's Head. He concludes it by saying that the doctrine of Universal Restoration is built upon the following propositions, which must be proved to be false before it can be overthrown:

I. God is love, essentially and communicatively, and loves all the beings he hath made, considered as his creatures, and is constantly seeking to do them good.

II. God's design in creating intelligent beings was to make them

works. The author appears to have held the doctrine of pre-existence, supposing that mankind were sent into this world, and that Adam was appointed their head, with a view to their recovery. In criticism he is abundant. Almost every page is loaded with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac or Chaldean, and sometimes they all appear on the same page; and these criticisms are carried to an extent which makes it difficult to excuse the author from the charge of being a pedant and hypercritic."

Whittemore has described two of the three works of Stonehouse on restitution - but neither title is exactly the title Winchester gives. However, the volume Winchester obtained must certainly have contained the contents of one of the above works, or possibly the contents of both.

Stonehouse's work seems to have been as scholarly as the "Everlasting Gospel" is simple. Winchester was well able to appreciate the scholarly work, yet his belief so far as we know it, is largely akin to the message of the simpler work.

1. Eddy: Universalism in America, Vol. I. pp. 219-237

happy in the knowledge and love of his glorious perfections.

III. God's absolute, ultimate designs cannot be eternally frustrated.

IV. Christ died for all; and died not in vain.

V. Christ came to destroy the evil principle, or sin, out of the universe, which he will finally effect, and then misery shall be no more."

From his Dialogues, a later theologian makes the following

summary:

"He found, in the Scriptures, explicit recognitions of a period, when all things should be gathered together in Christ;.....etc. Besides these, there were, in all parts of the Bible, many evident references to such a final consummation. The very plan of salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures, also involved Universalism; for God would have all men to be saved, and for that purpose send his Son, who gave himself a ransom for all, -a purpose that could never be abandoned. And then, again, he saw the same result secured by the perfections of God: the divine nature could not fail to triumph eventually over all evil, and to remove it from the universe; almighty power, omniscience, and infinite love could issue only in the sanctification and blessedness of all intelligent creatures. The objections, urged from the Scripture language, 'everlasting fire, punishment, etc'.... he answered by showing the ambiguous use of these epithets and qualifying phrases, and by lexicographical criticisms on the force of the original terms."<sup>1</sup>

From his Process and Empire of Christ, a poem, the same theologian gleans his eschatological views.

"His peculiar views of the intermediate state, and of futurity were the followings: Immediately after his crucifixion, the soul of Christ went first to Paradise (Lk. 23:43) and there announced, to the waiting expectant saints of all former ages, salvation through his blood just shed. Then he descended to hell, in the lower parts of the earth, and there 'preached to the spirits in prison', some of whom were thus converted. At his ascension, the souls both of the ancient believers in Paradise, and of the recent believers in Gehenna, followed him in his triumphal progress into heaven, (Ps. 68:18; Eph. 4:8) and were received with him into glory. - Before the end of the world, the bodies of all saints shall be raised, and they shall reign personally with Christ, a thousand years, on earth, in all terrestrial as well as spiritual enjoyments. At the close of this period, a general apostasy will follow the loosing of Satan; and, subsequently, the innumerable hosts of rebels will be destroyed, in a most terrible manner, by fire from heaven. Then shall come the second resurrection, and universal Judgment,

1. Hosea Ballou II; Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America, Universalist Quarterly, Jan. 1848, pp 98

(Rev. 20). This will be held on our earth. The separation having been made, and the doom pronounced, the righteous shall follow Christ in his return to the highest heaven; while the wicked shall be left behind for punishment (Mtt. 25). The earth will then be melted, by the final conflagration, into a lake of fire, the horrible abode of lost men and angels, for ages and ages. Their unutterable sufferings, however, will at length bring them to submission; though some of the most perverse may continue obstinate, perhaps, till the fifty-thousandth year, - answering to the Mosaic Jubilee of the fiftieth year. But when the earth shall have been thoroughly purified by the flames, and all rebels, angelic as well as human, brought to repentance, the new heavens and earth shall appear, and universal blessedness be complete. The Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God be all in all.\* 1

What a contrast is here presented to the doctrines of Murray!

Winchester, in his departure from Calvinism, attained the concept of a God whose nature is love, who wills powerfully and victoriously the happiness of all his created beings in Himself, the concept of a Christ who not only died for men but who revealed in his own, God's hatred of evil. Yet he has retained an eschatology which differs from the Calvinistic scheme only in a technical fashion. For a sinner, fifty thousand years of unutterable sufferings is about as far beyond the grasp of his imagination as endless ages of it! In place of a Sovereign God, ruling a miserable race of sin-bound men, who are by Him in Christ yet fully and utterly redeemed, without one particle of good works, merit, or even faith, on their own part, we have here a theology combining a God whose nature is love with all the age-old dramatic system of torments for the wicked, and equally abundant felicities for the good.

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1. Ibid, pp. 97-8

## CHAPTER III

## Rich's Denial of Endless Punishment

A third approach was "home made", by a simple American. He had no books to read, no London preacher to hear, yet, perhaps because his theology was an indigenous product, and was crude and simple as was its author, it had great effect on the future of Universalist theology.

Caleb Rich was born in 1750, in Sutton, Mass. and brought up in a home wherein the mother remained a Congregationalist, although the father became a Baptist. Religious discussion set him early to studying the Bible for himself. The fear of hell tortured him, then the discovery that all his prayers were selfishness, due to fear of hell. He gave himself up to God, and soon had a vision which assured him. After another vision, he "did not yet see that all men would be saved, but took up a notion from the third chapter of Genesis, that 'all men who were created in Adam, and fell in or died in him, would infallibly be restored, and made alive in Christ, while those who were added to our first parents after their fall (but I will greatly multiply thy conception and sorrows) would cease to exist after the death of the body.'"

Gradually, with intensive study of the Scriptures, and continual meetings with hearers and friends, Rich's doctrine developed to its final form, in which he humbly and earnestly preached it with such skill and knowledge as he possessed, to the end of his life. It has fortunately been recorded by a later minister, Russell Streeter, in these words.<sup>1</sup>

"I need not tell you Mr. Rich stood at one extreme of Universalism and Z. Laythe at the other; the one claiming to be the original promulgator of the leading points of the Treatise on Atonement, and the other a strict follower of Winchester, fire and brimstone, lake and all. This I had from

1. Autobiography, quoted by Eddy, Universalism in America, Vol. I, pp. 168-171

Father Laythe's own lips. On the contrary, Father Rich, in the only conversation I ever had with him (1816), was the first preacher who openly contended that all the (evil) consequences of sin were confined to the present life. He was very earnest on this point: he argued it on the ground of the Treatise, as it appeared for more than a quarter of a century, viz. that man was first created in Christ Jesus, and then formed of the dust, and that as he stood related to the earth of Adam only he sinned. Hence sin, as we call it, to use his own words, 'originated solely in the flesh and blood, and ended with the same. The spirit being of heavenly origin remained pure, though blended with carnal bodies: as pure metals were the same before being separated from the earth or dross, as afterwards; as wheat was the same before being separated from the chaff,' etc. Those passages of Scripture which speak of 'burning as an oven', 'unquenchable fire', 'coming in flaming fire' etc., were made to mean the fire of God's love...<sup>1</sup>

It appears to have been Caleb Rich who first, in the study of his Bible, worked out from Genesis 1:27, "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him," the idea that this meant a spiritual creation, which was followed by an entirely separate physical formation, as recorded in Genesis 2:7, "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground," and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul". It is not a far-fetched idea for a man to think of himself as a combination of the physical and the spiritual. Rich, however, as we have noted, denied all interaction between the two elements, insisting that the sins of the flesh were deeds of the flesh, and no more, that in them the spirit had no part. On this basis he felt enabled to argue that all men by death were released from all their sins, and sufferings, with the release from the flesh.

Rich began preaching this doctrine in 1778, in Warwick, Massachusetts, and soon also in Richmond and Jaffrey in New Hampshire. He continued in this section for many years.

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1. Article on Caleb Rich, by Rev. W. S. Balch, Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Jan. 1872, pp. 75-6

## CHAPTER IV

## State of Opinion, 1790 - 1805

A pamphlet published by Mr. Murray in 1791, entitled, "Hints relative to the Forming of a Christian Church, - to the Right Understanding of the Scriptures as the only Rule given by the Great Head of the Church for the Direction thereof; to the Rectifying of a few Mistakes respecting some Doctrines propagated under the Christian Name. Concluding with the Character of a Consistent Universalist; in a Letter to a Friend", gives the varieties of Universalism then known to him, besides his own, and his refutation of them all.

"First, Because our Saviour hath finished the work which was given him to do for us men, and for our salvation, it is asserted that we who are saved by the Lord, with an everlasting salvation, have nothing to do at all!"

"Secondly, It has been affirmed that the day of the Lord, commonly called the last day, or the day of judgment, is past."

"Thirdly, Some persons very seriously suppose that all mankind will be on a level in the article of death. They conceive it cannot be otherwise seeing that Jesus hath abolished death; and they believe that in the dissolution of the body the dust returns to the dust, and the spirit to God who gave it."

"Fourthly, There are many who, because the Scriptures are said, and with the strictest propriety, to testify of Jesus, believe that they testify of nothing or no one else; hence, under the influence of this error, they apply to the Saviour what the Holy Spirit applies to the grand adversary."

"Fifthly, There are many who, willing to speak peace to themselves where there is no peace, affirm that it is not sinners, but sin, that will be brought to the judgment;"

"Sixthly, There is a class of Universalists, more respectable than the former, who insist that, although all mankind will finally be saved, they have much to perform or to suffer, in order to satisfy divine justice, before this event can take place." <sup>1</sup>

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1. Eddy: Universalism in America, vol. I, pp. 365-376



Eddy interprets as follows:

"The first, second, and fourth classes of Universalists thus described, were doubtless Rellyans, who carried to an extreme, if they did not in some cases unconsciously caricature and burlesque, that system of theology.. As to the third class which Mr. Murray mentions,;...he doubtless refers to Caleb Rich and his followers, as we have no account of any others, at that time, to whom this description may be supposed to apply. It is not....a just statement of his theory, although Mr. Murray may have so understood it.

The fifth class of Universalists,.... we know nothing of.

The sixth class were the Winchesterians. They were numerous at the time this pamphlet was published. Mystical interpretations of the Bible were exceedingly distasteful to them, and they had introduced what was, in the main, a more rational exegesis, which was fast supplanting, if it had not already supplanted, except in the localities where Mr. Murray was personally laboring, the peculiar theories of interpretation necessitated by the Rellyan scheme. Mr. Murray was deeply stirred by this growing change, and he elsewhere expresses himself with great bitterness, as, indeed, he was inclined to feel towards all deviations from his own theory of redemption. It was difficult for him to be just in his statements of opposing theories. He certainly has not given a fair presentation of Mr. Winchester's views."<sup>1</sup>

It is not important, and scarcely possible, to know the spheres of influence of the Rellyan preachers of Universalism, with whom Murray could not agree, since their Rellyanism was being rejected. Rich's sphere of influence was at this time small. He was a humble man, of small education, and stayed in his own group of churches, in northern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Consequently, Murray's most serious competitor, in the opinion of the time (1791) was Winchester. In Philadelphia, New York, Connecticut, and Providence, both men were known by the small groups of Universalists. In Boston, and Gloucester, Massachusetts, Mr. Murray's parishes, his own views of course held sway. In the remainder of the Massachusetts groups, there was probably considerable variety of belief, as Rich, Murray, and Winchester were all influential there, to varying degrees.

In 1790, the Philadelphia Universalists called a convention to de-

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 379-381



cide on a common faith and practice. John Murray responded. Winchester was in England. The remaining members of the convention were from Virginia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This convention met in Philadelphia, and adopted the following "Articles of Faith".

"Sect. 1. Of the Holy Scriptures. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God, and the rule of faith and practice.

Sect. 2. Of the Supreme Being. We believe in One God, infinite in all his perfections; and that these perfections are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible, and unchangeable Love.

Sect. 3. Of the Mediator. We believe that there is One Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; who, by giving himself a ransom for all, hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by the merit of his death, and the efficacy of his Spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness.

Sect. 4. Of the Holy Ghost. We believe in the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation, through the medium of the Holy Scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of the children of men to God, and thereby to dispose them to genuine holiness.

Sect. 5. Of Good Works. We believe in the obligation of the moral law, as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God manifest to man in a Redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that Law, and promoting a holy, active, and useful life."

This was intended to be a broad statement, on which all could unite.

The members of the convention were partly Rallians and partly Winchesterians.

The Philadelphia church, which was composed of both types of Universalists,

immediately adopted these articles. When Mr. Murray took them back to his

group in Boston, and presented them for acceptance, they were criticized

by one man at least, as virtually denying the deity of Jesus. The articles

were adopted without alteration, but very shortly thereafter the opposition

succeeded in altering them so that they stood as the creed of the Boston

group in the following form:

1. Eddy; Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 297-8

"We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God, and the rule of faith and practice.

We believe in one God, infinite in all His perfections, and that these perfections are all modifications of adorable, incomprehensible, and unchangeable love, manifested to us in Christ Jesus.

We believe that the Spirit of God will, in due season, so effectually teach all men that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (whom to know is life eternal) as the waters cover the sea; for it is written, 'They shall be all taught of God'.

We believe in the obligation of the moral precepts of the Scriptures as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God manifested to man in a Redeemer is the best means of producing a holy, active, and useful life."<sup>1</sup>

The Boston church wrote to other Massachusetts churches, to Providence, R. I. and to a church in New York State, suggesting this statement as the basis of union. Caleb Rich had heard of the Philadelphia convention, had received the articles there adopted, (by the Rallyans and Winchesterians) and he and his society in Warwick had adopted them. He is reported to have written to Boston:

"The Articles of Faith adopted by the Convention at Philadelphia ... are, by all our brethren in these parts, judged to be more consistent with the liberty of the gospel than any that ever were presented to our view before. We join in saying that they are expressive of our belief in the lively oracles, etc."<sup>2</sup>

What further response, favorable or otherwise, the Boston people received, is not known.

Our study now leads us in parallel lines for a few years, the development of Universalism about Philadelphia being quite separate from the course of affairs in New England. Since the Philadelphia-centered movement has far less bearing on the future than the New England movement, we shall

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1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, p. 347

2. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, p. 348

examine it first, that we may then return to an uninterrupted consideration of the main stream of Universalist theology.

Remembering that the Philadelphians had been guided by Murray and Winchester, yet without internal discord in their ranks, we are further enlightened as to their group opinion by the following letters from their convention, approved by them all, in 1791 and 1792.

In the convention of 1791, there came a request from a new minister of Maryland, who "had been assailed with the charge that Universalists deny future punishment," and he of course wished to know the opinion of the convention. The following letter, approved by the convention, was drafted by Major James Moore, a layman.

"Dear Brother in Belief of the Truth,-

.....

Brother Hawkins mentioned your request to the Convention that they would furnish you with such evidences of their faith as might enable you to contradict and put to silence those who, either through malice or ignorance, assert that we deny future punishment by holding that all the fallen sons of Adam, the good and the bad, the believer and the unbeliever, go and appear equally alike, happy in that state that shall take place after the dissolution of this body. The Convention are well convinced that this unjust slander doth too much prevail among those that are ignorant of our true principles. Notwithstanding all our writings and public declarations and private conversations do declare to the contrary, they have ordered me to write you a few lines on that subject....

We do disclaim, neither are we in connection with, any that hold the above sentiment (if such there be). So far from that, we do believe that all that die without the knowledge of their salvation in Christ Jesus must be called unbelievers, and in the Scripture sense, do die in their sins; that such will not be purged from their sins or unbelief by death, but necessarily must appear in the next state under all that darkness, fear, and torment and conscious guilt which is the natural consequence of the unbelief of the truth. What may be the degree or duration of this state of unbelief and misery we know not. But this we know, if it be the just judgment and chastisement of our God, who is the Father of all spirits, that it hath one uniform and invariable end, namely, the good of the creature. For the Father chastiseth every son he loveth, and if we are without chastisement (whereof we are all partakers), we are bastards and not sons. And here we see that chastisement is an undoubted evidence of all that are chastised being sons, and we know

there are no bastards, for all are chastised.....

But it would be needless to repeat all those divine records that hold forth the restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began. We would refer you to this matter as mentioned by Dr. Stonehouse, Ramsey, Mr. Rely, Dr. Chauncy, Mr. Winchester, and many more....

Now, dear friend, however you may be enabled to defend in public God's universal love and power, and in consequence the restoration of all his creatures, and preach that it is not to be perfected in time, but in the dispensation of the fulness of time, yet many that even thus hear your labors will go away and say you hold no future punishment;...But be not discouraged, truth will prevail."<sup>1</sup>

In the convention of 1792, two questions came up. One was in regard to divine sovereignty and free will, and came from another church in Maryland, who had passed an act in their church

"that any member holding that all things that come to pass were irrevocably decreed so of God, and therefore nothing coming to pass is contrary to, or a transgression of, the will of Deity, but everything is consistent with his will that does come to pass, shall not be held in fellowship."

The answer is a beautiful letter on tolerance, from which we note the following:

"These things, dear brethren, were considered when many of us first met in convention to consult on some plan of articles of faith and church government. We met with different ideas; many of us believed, and still believe, the sentiments for which you condemn your brethren....and some of us are in sentiment opposed to these ideas; but we are far from believing that either sentiment ought to exclude any from union in the church.....We do not think it our province as a Convention to decide on any such sentiments, or attempt to establish any rule of orthodoxy."

The letter closes by reminding the church that they chose to come into fellowship on the Articles of Faith (quoted above) and Plan of Church Government, which do not specify in regard to this matter at all.<sup>2</sup>

And, in the same year, a letter breathing a like plea for mutual tolerance was sent to "the divided brothers at Pike Run, Washington County, Pennsylvania", written by the moderator, Major James Warren:

1. Eddy, Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 349-351

2. Eddy, Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 385-389

"As an individual I address you, and according to information, find you are not divided about the extent of salvation, but with respect to the mode of it. True, indeed, within my own knowledge I find those who have embraced this glorious truth much divided in this matter. But with us we are happy enough to find that these divisions tend more to cement than to separate us; for by this we learn forbearance, brotherly kindness, charity.... I see quite as much difference in the explanation of the mode of salvation with those who have embraced this doctrine, as there appears among other sects of contending Christians who have agreed in this, namely, that but a small part of mankind will be saved. But shall we take them for our example with respect to contention ending in divisions? God forbid. Yea, rather let us set them an example of forbearance, and constrain them to say, See how Universalists love one another....."

Hence the different opinions, - such as an endless hell of misery, or no hell at all in a future state; or a hell of punishment considered as a place of atonement, - all which I conceive to be equally wrong. Surely, we may safely say that he who 'believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, But as all have been in a state of unbelief, 'this shall not see life', etc. must only mean, while under this state; and as 'God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all,' and as believing surely gives us a manifestation of this mercy, as many as die without such knowledge must come to it in another state or dispensation, or be deprived of it time without end. You do not believe that death itself will give them such a manifestation; and as the consequence of this ignorance is pain and misery, we know this must await them till such a manifestation takes place. As for the degree or duration of this blindness and misery, we are not able to say; but know it must end in the time of the restitution of all things. And therefore we cannot, from divine record, believe in what is called an endless hell; nor can we believe that the chastisement, suffering, or whatever called, we may endure in a future state or dispensation, can make any atonement or compensation for the offence we have committed. This belongs to our great sacrifice, and that only.

Again, I beg, do not divide, wrangle, and destroy one another with doubtful words of disputation...."

This appears to be an individual letter, but it was written by one whom the Philadelphia church followed and trusted.

There enters on the scene for a very few years a Universalist minister who brought to this group still another approach to the central and unifying conviction. Rev. Abel Sarjent began in 1793 the publication of The Free Universal Magazine. The first number contained a lengthy creed, whose first

1. Eddy; Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 390-391

"We believe that there is one God, and that there is none other but he; that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the fulness of Godhead is included in this one character, Father; that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. In his being, love, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. A Being who acts, in all he does, entirely from his own Essence, independent of cause or motive by him seen in any of the actions of creatures, to excite or move him thereunto."<sup>1</sup>

In the light of this conception of God, Sargent addresses himself to the words "forever", "everlasting," etc. as follows:

"We can understand these words no other way than that they are expressive of undetermined periods; because it is evident from many places in Scripture that these words are expressive, sometimes of a longer, and sometimes of a shorter, duration of time.... There is but one rule given in Scripture, whereby we may understand or ascertain the meaning of these expressions, or the duration of time expressed by them; and that rule is the following, namely, by the nature of the objects unto which those expressions are applied;....

From the remarks already made, it is too evident to be denied that the words 'forever' and 'everlasting', etc. are to be understood by the objects unto which they are applied, and are never expressive of any longer duration than the existence of those objects.....

When these expressions are applied to the life of the saints, they are expressive of endless duration, because the object unto which, in this case, the words are applied, is of that nature that it must necessarily exist without end; hence it is called an endless life.... But when the same words are applied to the death of the wicked, they are expressive of a limited and timely duration; because, in this case, these words are applied to an object (death) which divine testimony assures us cannot exist without end, or always, but will be destroyed, and, therefore, will cease to exist... 'And there shall be no more death.'

Hence, from the Word, we are taught to believe that the righteous shall never be ashamed, world without end; but we are not thereby informed that any shall be ashamed, or blind, or wretched, or miserable, world without end. We also are by the Word informed that there is a period before us promised, when there shall be no more sorrow, crying, nor pain, - but not when there shall be no more joy, pleasure, and happiness; but we are well assured by the sacred records, that the latter shall be continued in endless existence, by the continuance of the existence of its cause, namely, life and order, with him that has the power of it; while the existence of the former shall be discontinued, by a total destruction of the existence of its cause, namely, sin and disorder, with him that has the power of it; so death shall be destroyed out of existence, with him that has the power of death."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, p. 401

2. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I. pp. 403-408



Sargent's conception of future punishment is revealed in the words he wrote to "Mr. and Mrs. Brown".

"Query I. Is it not the inward or celestial man, who in Scripture is called the new creature?

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; though the outward man perish, saith Paul, the inward man (which I suppose to be the new man) is renewed day by day.....I think it is said concerning the inward or new man, that he is created after God, in righteousness and true holiness....

Query II. Is it the old or outward man that commits the sins we are guilty of, or is it the new and inward man that is a sinner?

He that, or whose, is born of God (which must be the new man) sinneth not, or doth not commit sin; he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3:9). In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. They which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God. See Romans 8:8....

Query III. Is it the child of the flesh, the old man, that rises from the child of God, or the new man that rises?

Jesus said concerning those that rise from the dead (speaking un-exceptionally), 'They are the children of God, and are equal to the angels of God.'...And John says that the children of God do not commit sin....

The Apostle saith, 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new'. And surely all that rise from the dead must be new creatures, and must be in Christ; for 'in Christ shall all be made alive.'

It is the new man, and not the old, that rises from the dead, and the new man never committed sin. How can there be a punishment for sin after the resurrection?

Query IV. If to those who are raised from the dead old things are passed away, and all things are become new, pray what sins are those who rise from the dead punished for? If only the new man, who is called the child of God, rises from the dead, and if the new man never sinned, pray how can he be punished according to his works? Surely if his works were not sinful then he cannot deserve punishment?"<sup>1</sup>

We do not know where nor how Sargent found or built up these views.

And he and his magazine disappear very shortly into oblivion.

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 412-414

Yet this magazine, during its short period of existence was open to views very different from those of the author. Christopher Marshall, who wrote several articles, writes in one place as follows:

"Sin is of such a horrid and tormenting nature, that there shall be indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of men which doeth evil, both Jews and Gentiles, (Rom. 2:9) and that to such a degree, that many will not only wish they had never been born, nor seen the light of the sun, but even gnaw their tongues with pain and curse their God, and their king, and look upwards. Nevertheless, after this dark and horrid night of Aionion torments, they will, by the blood of the everlasting Covenant, be sent forth out of that pit wherein is no water. They shall hear the voice of the Lord reproving them, as Job did, and will clothe themselves with as manifold and greater humility than he. (Job. 42:2,6) as their torments were severer."

This is at the opposite extreme of belief in future punishment from that of the editor of the magazine. Rev. J. Bailey of Kentucky, a correspondent, takes a middle ground. He says:

"I am sorry to hear that there is any likelihood of a jar amongst the few witnesses for God's universal love at this time especially, as they are under the united frowns of all the other Christian societies; and the declarative interest of Christ and his everlasting gospel much depends upon their unity.

Though I confess that Calvinism as it relates to the decrees of election and reprobation, appears to me to be replete with blasphemy, inasmuch as it makes the blessed and adorable God the author of all wickedness; nevertheless we ought to exercise great tenderness towards those brethren who hold with election in the universal system, provided they keep up the idea of the future dispensations of Christ, in the distribution of rewards and punishments, till the close of the mediatory office of Christ, when God shall be All in All.

Those who hold the salvation of all men, exclusive of the future dispensations of Christ in the distribution of rewards and punishments (if there be any such), upon the most charitable conclusion, I humbly conceive that they are not aware how near they are bordering on gross deism, and an implicit if not a wilful, denial of the sacred Scriptures; and hope they will see that that part of their principles is a moth in their system, and will become a check to the progress of the truth, inasmuch as it stands in direct opposition to such a number of plain and unequivocal texts that pronounce future punishment upon those who die impenitent, which has as good a



right to compose a part of our creed as the most gracious promises."<sup>1</sup>

So far as our records will show, the creative period of theology in Philadelphia and the surrounding territory ends at this time. A decline came soon after, which nearly eclipsed Universalism in that section of the country.

Returning to New England, in 1791 we find Hosea Ballou entering the ministry. He was the beginning of the second generation, born after Murray began preaching in this country, hearing, not Murray but Caleb Rich, as a boy, and hearing also the violent discussion which arose over Rich's teaching. In 1829, when Thomas Whittmore was writing his "Modern History of Universalism", he wrote to Hosea Ballou a letter, asking for a clear statement of how he became a Universalist and on what principles. Let us thus get the story of Hosea Ballou's beginnings in Universalism from his own pen.

"Boston, November 25, 1829. Brother Whittmore:- I regret that it is not in my power to return answers to your several questions, with all the accuracy and minuteness which the occasion of your request seems to require. But owing to a fault in me, in not keeping a journal, I am unable to fix the date which you desire....As to the doctrine of Calvinism, in which my honored father was a believer, and which he preached until nearly the end of his public labors, my acquaintance with its various tenets, while quite a youth, was by no means very limited.....I was well acquainted with the most common arguments which were used in support of predestination, election, reprobation, the fall of man, the penal sufferings of Christ for the elect, the justice of reprobation, and many other particulars, such as regard the moral agency of man and his inability to regenerate himself, the sovereignty and irresistibility of regenerating grace, etc.

When I was in my nineteenth year, there was, what was termed, a reformation in the vicinity where I lived, and many of my young friends and acquaintances professed religion and joined the Baptist Church of which my father was pastor. At this time I became more especially attentive to the subject of religion and thought it my duty to become a professor, to join the church, which I did, in the sincerity of my heart, in the month of January, 1789.....I will now endeavor to notice your questions in their order,

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, p. 409

with as much brevity as convenient, and with as much accuracy as possible.

First, at the time I joined the Baptist Church, there were in Richmond and Warwick, a few individuals, who called themselves Universalists, and who occasionally heard Brother Caleb Rich hold forth that doctrine. There was also an elderly gentleman by the name of Ballou, a distant relative of my father, who also occasionally preached the same doctrine. These individuals frequently attended the Baptist meetings, and being of my acquaintance, we often conversed on the question, whether all mankind would alike be made partners of the salvation of God. In those conversations I frequently found that my Calvinistic tenets could be managed either to result in Universal Salvation, or to compel me to acknowledge the partiality of the divine favor. This gave me no small inquietude of mind, as I was always unable to derive satisfaction from sentiments which I could not defend. That which more than anything else contributed to turn my thoughts seriously towards the belief of Universal Salvation, was the ardent desires, with which I found myself exercised, that sinners might be brought to repentance and salvation. I found it utterly impossible to bring the feelings of my heart to conform to the doctrine of eternal reprobation; and I was compelled to allow, either that such feelings were sinful, or that my heavenly Father, in giving them to me, had imparted an evidence in favor of the Salvation of all men, the force of which I found no means to resist. As yet I was, like young converts in general, very little acquainted with the Scriptures. But the trials which I was then undergoing led me to examine the written word, to satisfy myself on the great question which had such weight on my mind. On reading the Bible, there would now and then, here and there, a passage appear to favor the doctrine of universal, and impartial grace. But all the prejudices of my early education in these things, were arrayed against my making any advanced."

(There follows the story of his going out to Hartford, New York, still entirely unsettled in his faith and there having a disputation with Elder Brown, pastor of the Baptist Church, on Universalism, in which Ballou successfully defended Universalism and therefore must have made some progress towards crystallizing his own mind in the matter.)

"I continued my researches with no small solicitude; and by reading the Scriptures, and by conversing with those who opposed the doctrine, before I returned the next fall, to Richmond, my mind was quite settled in the consoling belief that God will finally have mercy on all men. On my return I found that my brother David Ballou, whose age is some over twelve years advanced of mine, had not only openly professed Universal Salvation, but had commenced preaching the doctrine. I spent most of my time with him until the fall before I was twenty-one, when I began to speak in public, believing and preaching Universal Salvation, on the Calvinistic principles of atonement, and imputed righteousness.

Second, I never read anything on the doctrine of Universal Salvation

before I believed it, the Bible excepted; nor did I know, that I now recollect, there there was anything published in its vindication in the world. Nor had I ever heard a sermon on the subject, except what in boyhood I heard Brother Rich but concerning the sermons I realized nothing.

Third, it was sometime after I was a preacher of the doctrine, before I was at all acquainted with Rally's peculiar system; and if my memory serves me correctly, I had left the principles of Calvinism entirely, in relation to atonement, before I learned from Brother Murray the tenets which he received from Mr. Rally.<sup>1</sup>

Hosea Ballou was a very young man at this time and had had unfortunately a most limited education. Hence he was not writing and we know no more as to the type of preaching with which he started his ministry, in 1791, than the above words can tell.

In 1794 Rev. Elhanan Winchester returned from England and took an extensive tour through Massachusetts and Connecticut, speaking he says "to great numbers of people, as often as eight or nine times a week, and with greater acceptance than ever I did." He was present at the session of the New England convention in September of that year and presided as Moderator. Hosea Ballou, who had been preaching three years already itinerantly in New Hampshire and Connecticut, was most unexpectedly ordained by him at that time. The same convention also adopted the Philadelphia platform with articles of faith (which are given above). From this time on for several years Winchester's works were read and known in the interior of New England quite extensively, and, had it not been for his untimely death about two years later, Mr. Winchester would very likely have been a strong competitor with Hosea Ballou for leadership in thought. However, his death left the field clear of real leadership and Hosea Ballou early showed symptoms of a strong and original mind.

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Continuing Mr. Ballou's own story as above quoted:

1. Whittamores: Modern History of Universalism, pp. 433-436

"I had preached but a short time before my mind was entirely freed from all the perplexities of the doctrine of the trinity, and the common notion of atonement. But in making these advances, as I am disposed to call them, I had the assistance of no author or writer. As fast as those old doctrines were, by any means, rendered the subject of inquiry, in my mind, they became exploded. But it would be difficult for me now to recall the particular incidents which suggested queries in my mind respecting them. It may be proper for me here to state one circumstance, which, no doubt, had no small tendency to bring me on to the ground where I have, for many years, felt established. It was my reading some deistical writings. By this means I was led to see that it was utterly impossible to maintain Christianity as it had been generally believed in the church. This led me, of course, to examine the scriptures, that I might determine the question, whether they did really teach that Jesus Christ died to reconcile an unchangeable God to his own creatures? You cannot suppose that I was long in finding that so far from teaching such absurdities, the scriptures teach that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.' The question respecting the trinity was by the same means as speedily settled. But I cannot say, for certainty, what year I became a Unitarian, but it was long before I wrote my Treatise on the atonement, the date of which you have."<sup>1</sup>

The testimony of Rev. Edward Turner, another Universalist minister, goes to show that Hosea Ballou had made the change abovementioned in the first four years of his preaching and that it was practically completed by 1795.

"The Universalists appear to have taken the lead of other denominations in announcing Unitarian views of the person of Christ and of the nature of the atonement. Though, as we have said before, the preachers of this order were understood to found their belief on Calvinistic principles; yet there might be some among them, who had attained to clearer and more rational conceptions of the sense of the Scriptures, in relation to these topics. We can speak of the change in their mode of preaching, from memory only. It was not until the year 1795, that we noticed any change at all. Others, it is possible, may have discovered it before....We, however, heard these statements and the arguments in support of them, for the first time, in the year above mentioned. The preacher, on that occasion, was the author of the Treatise on atonement."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Ballou's activity again cropped up in a correspondence which he himself solicited with Mr. Joel Foster, minister of the Congregational Society in New Salem. This correspondence on future punishment and the reasons for and against it extended from 1797 into 1799, and it was published in a pamphlet in the latter year. Mr. Ballou opens with the following questions:

1. Whittemore: Ibid. p. 436\*7

2. Rev. Edward Turner: Changes in the Religious Views of Universalists, Universalist Quarterly, January 1849. pp. 13, 14

"First, is it possible for any being not to answer the final purpose intended by God in his creation?

Second, do the Scriptures teach us that God intended the eternal misery of any of the human kind, or to glorify himself in their endless wretchedness?

Third, was it the mission of Christ to die for, and finally save, the human race?"

Mr. Foster answered the first question by inquiring whether God's final purpose was a general one or extended to every detail of a man's life. In answer to the second question he said that the Scriptures taught the eternal destruction, punishment, or misery of certain characters of our race, but did not designate any particular individuals who should attain that kind of character. To the third question he said that Christ died for the whole human race, but perhaps all men would not be benefited by his death. In that case it was just as well that not all men would be benefited by his death. If, however, there were to be universal salvation, it would be just as well for moral reasons that men should not expect it. He disclaimed any aversion to the doctrines of Universal Salvation.

Ballou replies by denying:

"that the final intention of the Creator can stop short of the last event which concerns the creature; for if so, we must suppose that the Creator has constituted beings for a longer duration than he had any eventful purpose depending."

And again, farther on in the letter, we find the following:

"With regard to what you said on the duration of the misery of the wicked, which solution you draw from the same words being applied to it as is applied to the happiness of the saints, little need be said, seeing you acknowledge that you are not to be informed that this word is sometimes applied to circumstances and things which are not strictly eternal. I will therefore only give you the criterion on which I try this point: although this is not to be determined from the bare word, yet we may try it on plain Scripture rule. Let us ask then, Can misery continue any longer than the cause continues? Answer: No. In the next place, What is the cause of misery? Answer: Sin. In the next place, Will sin ever be destroyed, or will it endure

to all eternity? Answer: 'Seventy weeks are determined on thee, and on thy people, in which he will finish sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness', etc. Now let us ask, What is the cause of the happiness of the saints? Answer: Righteousness, even that of Christ's. Now observe, he finishes sin, which is the cause of misery, and brings in everlasting righteousness, which is the cause of happiness. Now, as it is impossible to prove that righteousness will ever come to an end, the happiness of all the saints will continue. 'Because I live, ye shall live also'. Although I consider this point fairly investigated, yet I will remind you of one text which in itself is conclusive to this effect. (Rev. 21,4) 'And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' etc."

In Mr. Foster's reply, he himself asks questions:

"First, do you believe there is any moral difference between virtue and vice? or any difference but in name only?

Second, Do you believe in any punishment at all after this life?"

Mr. Ballou answered the first in the affirmative and the second in the negative. A little later, Mr. Ballou and Mr. Foster met and talked on a trip. A later letter of Mr. Ballou's runs as follows:

"If you recollect, Sir, in the little opportunity which we had on the road, I observed to you, that I did not believe in future misery, because it was a matter in which I was not established; and therefore could not say that I believed that in which I was not established.

I am now satisfied with the idea of a future state of discipline, in which the impenitent will be miserable."

In the next letter of Mr. Foster, answering this, which was his last letter, he says:

"I recollect what you observed on the road to Orange, concerning your not being established in the point respecting any punishment after this life. You now profess yourself 'satisfied with the idea of a future state of discipline', etc. I am at a loss on what grounds you obtain this satisfaction; or how you can know that the miseries of the future life are disciplinary, and not rather strictly penal."

Mr. Ballou wrote one more letter, which closed the correspondence but does not allude to this point directly in that letter.<sup>1</sup>

In 1802 the General Convention of Universalists of the New England states appointed a Committee to frame an avowal of common principles, by which

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 520-535



the Universalists should be recognized as a Christian denomination. The Committee represented all the different points of view. Hosea Ballou was one member of it. The other members and their views are characterized as follows:

"Zebulon Streeter was a man of calm and dignified demeanor, not bound by any special form of words, but understood to favor the Restorationist views of salvation; George Richards was a convert of Mr. Murray, and favored his views of the Trinity, Vicarious Atonement and Imputed Righteousness, as set forth in Rally's Union, from which Murray never advanced one step; Walter Ferris rejected the sacrificial theology and virtually the doctrine of the Trinity, but favored the 'Final Restoration' as expressed in the Profession; Zephaniah Laythe was a strict follower of Winchester."<sup>1</sup>

The profession of belief which these men brought before the Convention and which was adopted, and ever since known as the Winchester profession, is as follows:

"Article I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest, and final destination of mankind.

Article II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

Article III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men."

Here is simply explained the central and unifying conviction which made these Universalists able to knit themselves together more closely on the one point of universal salvation which was the prime and foremost character in each mind and in all minds.

In the next year in 1804 Mr. Ballou began his career as an author with "Notes on the Parables."

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"Mr. Ballou approached his investigations of the parables under the

1. Article on Rev. Caleb Rich by Rev. W. S. Balch, Universalist Quarterly, January 1872, p. 73

influence of the theory then in his thought, - that man made in the Divine Image, as to his higher nature, was created, by virtue of his flesh and blood, under a law of condemnation, and was subject to a carnal guidance. There are also traces of Rellian and Mystical views. In their earthly character all men were sinners, and no man in or by his carnal mind could bring forth good fruit. Adam died in the day of his transgression; and as he was the root from which mankind sprung, they sprung from a spiritually dead root. Hence, he asked; 'If we sprang from a spiritually dead root, can we possess any spiritual life derived from that root?' Consequently he held that man in his Adamic nature - his earthly nature, denoted by the carnal mind - cannot perform any acceptable works of righteousness. But man has a spiritual as well as an earthly side, and it was to redeem the soul from the dominion of the carnal mind that Jesus was sent into the world. The Pharisees thought to make themselves righteous by performing the mere ceremonies of the law, and hence had not on the wedding garment, which was the righteousness of Christ. As they stood in their law character they were a generation of vipers, as is every child of Adam in the earthly character."<sup>1</sup>

Strange to say, although Murray, the follower of Rely in theology, had lived in New England and even in Boston, the heart of New England, for years, his peculiar presentation of universal salvation was there being rapidly discredited, much to his chagrin, anxiety and concern. It is interesting to note that the last echoes of the salvation which Murray preached come to us from New York and from Pennsylvania. Let us listen to them.

In 1797 Mr. Murray published a pamphlet on Universalism Vindicated which was a purely Rellian pamphlet. It was one in which he took great satisfaction as being a full and complete expression of his theology. Two years later it was republished in Rome, New York. This meant that he and his theology had devoted followers out in that section of New York, which was then considered far west.

Again, a Universalist church was formed by a group of Methodists in New York City in 1796. At the time of their formation they followed Mr. Winchester, but during the absence of their regular pastor Mr. Murray came and preached to them and they turned to his views. Their preacher, Rev. Edward Mitchell, did likewise on his return. Mr. Mitchell went on for many

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, pp. 67 and 68

years, preaching a purely Rellian type of theology, till at his death in 1834 or 5, he was the last Rellian preacher. The church, unable to get another Rellian preacher, suspended activity.

And lastly, we have, fortunately, a letter by the pastor of a church, which was sent to the Convention at Philadelphia, May 25, 1805. The church was that of New Britain, Pennsylvania. It runs as follows:

"Dear Brethren: - An Inspired Apostle defines the Gospel of Christ to be Glad tidings of good things, and what tidings can be more gladdening and better, to him that knows the fallen, helpless state of man, who knows that he is a sinner, and that sin doth involve the curse which he is not able to endure or to extinguish, - than to hear that God, who is infinitely wise, powerful and good, is the first cause and last end of all things? That thereby limits are fixed to the degree and duration of all evil, that all the evil which hath entered into the moral and physical world, is the subject of annihilation, and shall through the strict execution of the unfrustrable decree, be made to subserve the promotion of final, universal, purity and happiness. That the mediation of our most adorable Lord Jesus, doth, and eternally did exist, and that the existence thereof doth eternally interest mankind therein, although the far greater number in the present time know it not, and do not desire the knowledge thereof. That the mediation of Jesus Christ laid on him the iniquity of us all, and brought him under the obligation of delivering us from the Curse, by being made a Curse for us, and that through an illumination of our minds in the knowledge of this grace and truth, mankind are saved from the dominion of sin, and from the tormenting fear of the Curse of the law, and are sweetly reconciled to God and to each other in Evangelical love and purity. That God most absolute, according to His Sovereign Will, hath elected a particular number of mankind to be real Believers in this life, all whom he doth in the present life sweetly incline to seek to know the Lord; to all such, (without any exception) God doth in the present life shew His Salvation, and that the manifestation thereof shall be their All-sufficient and unceasing heaven. That all those who are not thus elected, God doth suffer them during the present life to rest easy in their sins; and in the embrace of irreconcilable contradictions, they have no desire to attain to the knowledge of the only True God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; - Therefore, their lot will be, to die ignorant of their salvation from the charge and demerit of sin being fully completed in Jesus Christ. That their ignorance will be their sufficient future hell, binding them as much under the tormenting fear of the charge of sin and its demerits, as if Jesus had not saved them therefrom; in which awful state they must remain until the dispensation of fulness of time. But the evil being temporary, God's distinguishing mercy to the one, and His awful severity to the other, is to subserve the promotion of final and universal purity and happiness to all. Therefore, manifestly consistent with every attribute in God, and the existence of the most glorious mediation of Jesus Christ, this being a summary of the Gospel of Christ, every part thereof is Glad Tidings of Good Things.

Also it is plain from metaphysical deductions, that Whatever God doth hate He will finally annihilate. God doth implacably hate sin, Therefore He will finally annihilate it.

Further, What God will not finally hate, He doth necessarily love, Therefore, if God will not finally annihilate all sin, He doth necessarily love it.

These arguments, in conjunction with the word and oath of God that He hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, do demonstratively and superabundantly prove the limitarian doctrine to be false and Anti-Christian. Although in the present day a few only are inclined of God to desire to attain the knowledge of the most precious truth, - the absoluteness, universality and immutability of God's love, - the universality and absoluteness of Salvation through the merits of Christ alone, - that God will finally gather all into the knowledge of Himself, - yet we are under the greatest obligations to rejoice in God, that the proof of the existence of this truth is so plain, demonstrative, and invincible, that the most accomplished limitarian will never be able argumentatively to answer and confute. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. Therefore let us not be discouraged, but animated unitedly to defend the truth, illustrating it and the necessity of seeing, knowing and believing it, in order that we may partake of eternal life.\*1

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1. Eddy: Universalist Conventions and Creeds,  
Universalist Quarterly, July 1875, pp. 316-317

## CHAPTER V

## The Significance of the Period from 1770 to 1805

During this period the lines of thought which were influential were those of Murray, of Winchester, and of Caleb Rich. All these men had been at some time in their lives, thorough Calvinists, although Winchester had turned to Arminianism before becoming a Universalist. Their idea of God was quite Calvinistic, in that they thought of God as an absolute sovereign, final ruler of all men and all things. Their idea of man as helpless was also Calvinistic (Winchester's idea excepted).

Murray's alteration of Calvinism was just sufficient to form the grounds for denying that men deserved eternal punishment. He found in the Scriptures, as his leader Rely did, proofs that Christ is the head of each man, therefore that all are saved. Christ has fulfilled all righteousness for them. Rich altered Calvinism just enough to be able to deny that men deserved eternal punishment. He did it by holding that while man in his fallen estate was hopeless and helpless, that he was first created in Christ, therefore that the inner divine part of him was always pure and was saved and should be saved. Winchester altered Calvinism likewise, just enough to make it possible to deny that men deserved eternal punishment. He did it, however, by a more radical step, by a different view of the nature of God. He insisted that God is love and that his beneficent purpose will extend to all of his creatures.

As for the ideas of sin involved in the theologies of these men, two of them are certainly not adequate. Murray made sin merely disbelief, but he threw the responsibility for that on God, so that there is no real

sin, in our present sense of the term, in his whole doctrine. Rich made sin wholly physical, bound up with the physical body, having nothing to do with the inner spirit of a man. That also seems inadequate. So far as we have been able to discover Winchester's belief, his sense of sin was adequate, at least for that time.

The ideas of punishment expressed vary greatly. Murray says that those who die in unbelief shall have torments of fear and anxiety concerning their fate as the inevitable consequence of their unbelief. But, since God is responsible for their unbelief this is not punishment at all. Winchester, as we have found, held to the old dramatic scheme of punishment, removing only the endlessness of it, while Rich on the contrary held to no punishment at all in a future state of existence.

All these theologies were but partial alterations of an old basis. The old basis was that of a sovereign God and of a helpless humanity and of a definite and precise scheme of salvation. These alterations differ one from another but each one retains in some part a mechanical idea of the relation between God and man. None of these early theologians grasped the fact of real ethical relationship between God and his creature. In the opinion of the author, Winchester, in spite of all the horrible eschatology which he retained had the best approach to a modification of Calvinism, in the changing of his thoughts of the nature of God. Winchester was a man of far better training than the others, and it is greatly to be regretted that he was not able to live many years longer and take a vital part in the development of Universalist doctrine.

Thus ends the first period of Universalist theology. It was indeed a period of denial of endless punishment. One continuous polemic against the endless Hell was then being preached by Universalists. This was the unifying



feature of a period otherwise vague and chaotic. Aside from the fundamental principles agreed upon in the creeds we have noted there were an apparently hopeless confusion of individual beliefs.

## II

## CONTROVERSY ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT. 1805 to 1840.

## CHAPTER I.

## Its Inception. 1805 - 1817

Beginning with 1805 we enter a new period in Universalism, - a period of construction and formulation, in which the unifying and defining of ideas on punishment would have been inevitable, as the movement continued. A new theology was introduced by Ballou in 1805, which superseded all previous systems in the mind of Universalists. This work is itself the beginning of the formulative period. The main lines of theology were laid down first, as is proper, and slowly its inhering implications as to punishment were worked out.

Section A. Ballou's Treatise on the Atonement, 1805

It is advisable to compare the theology of the Treatise with Calvinism itself rather than with the various systems we have been studying. In so doing we quote from the five points of Calvinism and from the second edition of the Treatise on the Atonement, published in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1812.

1. Doctrine of God. It needs no quotation to recall to us that the whole system of Calvinism depends upon the absolute sovereignty of God. Ballou, we find, carried this over and made it the foundation stone of his system of theology.

"Now to reason justly, we must conclude, that if God possessed infinite wisdom, he could never intend anything to take place, or be, that will not take place, or be; nor that which is, or will be, not to be, at the time when it is. And it must be considered erroneous to suppose that the Allwise

ever desired anything to take place, which, by his wisdom, he knew would not... Again, if we admit of a disappointment to the Supreme Being, even in the smallest matter of consideration, it follows, that we have no satisfactory evidence whereby to prove that anything at present in the whole universal, is as the Supreme intended."<sup>1</sup>

Again:

"But if it be stated, that, although God gave man his agency, for the glorious purpose of his endless felicity, yet his purpose may fail; could this statement be proved true, it would not only refute universal salvation, but everything else, as being a divine system, on which we may, with any confidence, depend."<sup>2</sup>

The difference between Calvinistic ideas of God and Ballou's ideas lie not in the sovereignty of God, in which they both agreed absolutely as being the basis of all religious knowledge, but in the nature of God. The first point of the five points of Calvinism shows God as an arbitrary sovereign, unbiassed by any moral or other consideration than that of his own inscrutable will.

"God hath chosen a certain number of the fallen race of Adam, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, unto eternal glory, according to his immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature, and the rest of mankind he was pleased to pass by, and ordain to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his vindictive justice."

Here Ballou differs because he teaches with the sovereignty of God the love of God. He gives to that same supreme God an ethical quality which he usually calls love.

"What an infinite difference there is between the All gracious and Merciful and his lost and bewildered creatures? He, all glorious, without a spot in the whole infinitude of his nature; all lovely, without exception, and loving, without partiality. Who can tell the thousandth part of his love to his offspring? And this invariably the same through every dispensation, without the smallest abatement. But what can we say of man? Lost in the wilderness of sin, wandering in the bypaths of iniquity, lost to the knowledge of his heavenly Benefactor, and dissatisfied with his God; he goes on grumbling and complaining, attributing the worst of characters to the most Merciful, and entertaining no regard for the fountain of all his comfort. God never called for a sacrifice to reconcile himself to man; but loved man so infinitely, that he was pleased to bruise his Son for our good, to give him to die, in attestation of love to sinners."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>: pp: 150 and 17

<sup>3</sup>: p. 449

This is the prime difference between Ballou's system of theology and Calvinism. The one depends on the sovereign will of God, the other on the sovereign will of God which is combined with a love as infinite, as high and as powerful. Ballou's whole book and all of his subsequent writings rest on this double foundation of the sovereign will and the infinite love and goodness of God.

2. The Doctrine of Man. The nature of man and the question of his ability are settled by Calvinism in its third point.

"3. Mankind are totally depraved in consequence of the fall of the first man, who being their public head, his sins involved the corruption of all his posterity; which corruption extends over the whole soul, and renders it unable to return to God, or to do anything truly good, and exposes it to his righteous displeasure, both in this world and that which is to come."

In Ballou's doctrine of the nature of man, he seems to have followed Caleb Rich, who was the Universalist preacher in his neighborhood, during Ballou's youth, although he never acknowledges any indebtedness to Rich. We find his statements as follows:

"Man, according to these statements, is of heavenly extraction; is, in his nature allied to the heavenly state, in which he was created, before he was formed of the dust of the ground. And I call on the reason of my readers to testify to the rationality of the idea. If the mind, spirit, soul, or whatever the reader pleases to call the immortal part of man, originated from the earthly nature of the formed creature, what is the reason that the good, which supports the formed nature, does not satisfy the soul? Our natural appetites originate in the elements of which our bodies are composed, and aliment produced from them is sufficient to satisfy any natural appetite of the body; but can it give a ~~cup~~ of consolation to the heavenly stranger within? No; her food is of a different kind. Was the earth, with all her mines and fruits, my own, this moment, on condition that I should give up the riches which I see in this heavenly relation, my bargain would make me poor.

As man stood in his formed state, clothed with mortal flesh and blood, before his mind became obsequious to the elementary passions, a law was shadowed to his mind from the heavenly and spiritual man. The full spirit, power and beauty of the law, were not perfectly understood, only a shadow of the heavenly nature passed on his mind, and the nature of that spirit being eternal,

and immortally pure, was opposed to the passions which would immediately rise from the fleshly nature;...But immediately the powerful vibrations of the fleshly nature absorbed his mind, he sought to the carnal man for food, ate and died."<sup>1</sup>

"Christ is said to be the 'image of the invisible God, and the first born of every creature.' His being the firstborn of every creature, agrees with his being the beginning of the creation of God. It is plain to me, from Scripture, that the Mediator is the first human soul which was created, as Adam was the first man that was formed; and that he is, in spirit, the Father of every human creature, as much as Adam is in the flesh. Therefore, Christ said, as it is written, 'Behold I am the children that thou hast given'.<sup>2</sup>

And again, more fully yet:

"I will make the statement of the doctrine which I believe as short as possible. First, God created man, in Christ the Mediator; in which creation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, of which St. Paul speaks to the Romans, was the whole governing principle of his nature. Second, after the creation of man in this divine constitution, it pleased the Almighty to reduce him to a state of formation in flesh and blood; in which constitution, the law of sin, which St. Paul said he found in his members, became the governing principle of the whole man. Third, God has revealed his divine and glorious purpose of bringing man back from his formed state, and from under the law of the earthly Adam, to his original created state, forever to be under the governing power of the law of the heavenly constitution."<sup>3</sup>

As to the ability of man, Ballou gives him no ability at all, technically. He says (p. 64): "Man is dependent, in all his volitions, and moves by necessity." He goes on to argue on these grounds:

"I have already shown, that will is a consequence arising from our perceptions of objects, which proves if our understanding were perfect, our will would be so. The criminality, therefore, might be placed on the understanding, as well as on the will. The reader will observe, that I am speaking of criminality, which is supposed to be seen by the All Wise, in his creatures. It certainly cannot be difficult for the reader to see, that there is as much inability in the understanding, as there is in the will, when a man is so much deceived, as to think it more for his happiness to be dishonest, than to be governed by principles of integrity....God's holy, just and infinitely perfect law, stands in the eternal constitution of the heavenly man, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven; it requires perfect holiness in Christ the Mediator, who is the Lord, our righteousness. And in him, we are able to fulfil all righteousness, and stand unaccused and uncondemned. I say more, we have never violated that perfect law of holiness, in the heavenly nature, but have fulfilled all it required. But we are unable to fulfil those divine requirements in our carnal, or old man. I have already hinted, that perfect wisdom and knowledge were necessary in order to fulfil a perfect law, and it is in Christ alone, that we find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him, we possess every ability to keep the law of God perfectly; but in the

1. pp. 32, 33

2. p. 119

p. 141

earthly Adam, we have not one single faculty, that is fit for so holy a service."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we perceive that in Ballou's mind man is still the creature of God, practically unable to do anything towards his own salvation.

### 3. The Doctrine of Sin.

#### A. The Nature of Sin.

In Calvinism, sin was infinite, because it offended and violated the rule of an infinite God. Ballou taught that sin was finite. "Of the nature of sin. Sin is the violation of a law which exists in the mind, which law is the imperfect knowledge men have of moral good....My supposition, that sin, in its nature, ought to be considered finite and limited, rather than infinite and unlimited."<sup>2</sup>

Ballou's logical position is this: Moral knowledge is finite, sin is violating moral law, therefore sin is finite. He insists that sin belongs to the class of things of which it is a violation.

#### B. The Origin of Sin.

Calvinism tells us that sin came from "the fall of the first man"... These "sins involve the corruption of all posterity, which, corruption extends over the whole soul." Ballou on the contrary tells us

"God saw fit, in his plan of divine wisdom, to make the creature subject to vanity; to give him a mortal constitution; to fix in his nature those faculties which would, in their operation, oppose the spirit of the heavenly nature. It is, therefore, said, that God put enmity between the seed of the woman, and that of the serpent. And it was by the passions which arose from the fleshly nature, that the whole mind became carnal, and man was captivated thereby. But perhaps the objector will say: 'This denies the liberty of the will, and makes God the author of sin,' To which I reply, desiring the reader to recollect what I have said of sin, in showing its nature; by which it was discovered, that God may be the innocent and holy cause of that, which, in a limited sense, is sin; but as it respects the meaning of God, it is intended for good. It is not casting any disagreeable reflections on the Almighty, to say he determined all things for good; and to believe he supercedes all the

1. pp. 66-68

2. pp. 15, 16



affairs of the universe, not excepting sin, is a million times more to the honor of God than to believe that he cannot, or that he does not when he can. The reader will then ask, if God must be considered as the first, the holy, and the innocent cause of sin, is there any unholy or impure cause? I answer, there is, but in a limited sense. There is no divine holiness, in any fleshly or carnal exercise; there is no holiness nor purity in all the deceptions ever experienced by imperfect beings; and these are the immediate causes of sin; and as such they make the best of men on earth groan, and cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that the origin of sin by Ballou traced back to the sovereign and yet loving God, who gave us the natures through which we inevitably do sin.

### C. The Consequences of Sin.

According to Calvinism the consequences of sin are God's "righteous displeasure both in this world and that which is to come." Ballou, on the contrary, after a long discussion of the actual and visible consequences of sin as he sees them and finds them here in this world, says:

"As I have limited sin in its nature, the reader will not expect to find unlimited consequences attached to it, in this work. Were it so, that the fullness of the divine law was perfectly comprehended in the mind of the creature, and he should go contrary thereto, his sin would then be as infinite as the law transgressed; but I argue, that the law transgressed, is a law formed in the mind of an imperfect being, by the imperfect knowledge which he obtains of the divine law, which is no other than God himself. This knowledge being imperfect, forms a law like itself, imperfect and mutable; and an imperfect, mutable law does not afford data from which to argue endless consequences.... Sin is death to the soul, as long as it sins, be that time longer or shorter. In order to argue an endless consequence, we must first state an infinite cause; and as I have argued sin on a finite scale, and in a limited circle, I must rationally limit its consequences."<sup>2</sup>

This point really completed the idea which is the heart of Ballou's theology. His major premise was that God was all powerful, the great universal ruler. In that nearly everyone in New England agreed with him at that time. His minor premise was that God was of a nature of love and goodness.

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1. pp. 35, 38

2. 83, 84

Therefore his conclusion is that God not only can but will do away with all of the suffering of sin in itself and its consequences.

#### 4. Doctrine of Atonement.

The nature of the atoning one and the consequences of the atonement are all given in the second of the five points of Calvinism. "2.

"2. Though the death of Christ be a most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins, of infinite value, and abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world, and though on this ground the gospel is to be preached to all mankind indiscriminately, yet it was the will of God that Christ, by the blood of the cross, should efficaciously redeem all those, and those only, who were from eternity elected to salvation and given to him by the Father."

Ballou's conception of the nature of the atonement is found in the following passages:

"The reader will now see, with ease, that, that power which causes us to hate sin, and love holiness, is the power of Christ, whereby atonement is made....God's love to us is antecedent to our love to him, which refutes the notion of God's receiving the atonement; but the idea, that the manifestation of God's love to us, causes us to love him, and brings us to a renewal of love, (in which spirit we all stood, in our spiritual head, Jesus, before formation; and from which, we, in a certain sense, elapsed, after being made subject to vanity) is imperfectly consonant to the necessity of atonement, it shows us what atonement is, and the power which the Mediator must have and exercised in order to reconcile all things to God....Now I call up the question again, has Jesus power to cause us to love holiness, and to hate sin? Answer: Yes, if he have power to reveal the divine beauties of the word, to remove the letter and its administration which are death, to take the veil from the heart, and to cause us to see himself altogether lovely.

When a sinner views God as an enemy, and grumbles concerning his being hard and austere, when he feels an aversion to him, and wishes to avoid his presence, it is certain that the Son has not revealed the Father to that soul. The ideas thus entertained of God are altogether wrong, and the mind that entertains them has no just conceptions of the Almighty. But blessed be the express image of the Invisible; he hath power to reveal the true character of the Father, to remove the veil from the heart, and to let the sunbeams of divine light gently into the understanding; then God appears altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand, while the soul in ecstasy embraces the greatness of his glory, crying 'My Lord, and my God.' " 1

And again:

"Atoning grace produces all which the Bible means by conversion, or being born of the Spirit; it brings the mind from under the power and constitution of the earthly Adam, to live by faith on the Son of God, and to be ruled and governed, even in this life, in a great measure, by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. It opens eternal things to our view and contemplation; it brings heaven into the soul, and clothes the man in his right mind; it inspires the soul with divine meekness and boldness, at the same time. It was this that enabled the apostles of our Lord to preach the gospel, in defiance of the rage of their enemies, and gave them immortal consolations in their sufferings for the cause of truth. It causes the Christian to love all God's rational creatures, and to wish their saving knowledge of the truth; it produces good works in their purity, and all the morality worth the name is founded on it. Its divine power is stronger than any possible opposition, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it; it opens a door of everlasting hope, and conducts the soul, by way of the cross, to immortality and eternal life. This dispensation of atonement is manifested through Christ, for the reconciliation of all things to God, in his glorious kingdom of holiness and happiness."<sup>1</sup>

Ballou says that the necessary Mediator is a "created dependent being"<sup>2</sup>. Also that he has sufficient power to accomplish the work in which he is engaged.<sup>3</sup>

In dealing with the consequences of atonement Ballou of course warms to his subject with confidence and joy.

"If we look on man, in the sinful Adam, there is no appearance of heavenly life, or divine animation; the soul is bound in the fetters of sin, frozen with covetousness, and apparently dead in the winter of iniquity. But behold the Sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings, removing sin, by the power of grace, and killing moral death, with divine life and animation, and causing the soul to rejoice in the kingdom of grace and glory... How mysterious are the ways of God! What infinite depths of wisdom lie concealed from the sight of mortals! He, who varies the seasons of the year, and diversifies nature through so great a number of changes without losing the smallest particle of matter, can carry his rational creatures through all the dispensations designed in infinite wisdom, without losing any, and consummate the whole in glory at last."<sup>4</sup>

Again:

"Now, what I wish to prove, from scripture, is a complete deliverance of the whole humanity from mortality, and the governing power of the law of sin which is found in our members, to a reinstatement in the heavenly Adam of immortality, where the law of the spirit of life will be the whole governing power, to which man will be subjected. It seems reasonable to conclude, that

1. p. 140
2. p. 446
3. p. 121
4. p. 137

man, in a spiritual sense, was created in Christ, the heavenly nature, as his body was formed in Adam, earthly. And as all our bodies came from that one formation, so all our spirits came from that one creation. As it is by the nature of this one formed creature, that we are all brought into a state of moral death, so it must be by the spirit of this one created man that all will be brought, finally, to the enjoyment of spiritual life and peace."<sup>1</sup>

"I will take further notice of Paul's communication to Timothy. He goes on in the fifth and sixth verses to give Timothy a reason for that he has asserted: 'For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.' The apostle's reasoning is evidently good and plain; for God would not have given his son a ransom for all, if it were not his will that all should be saved; and if it be God's will, it ought to be ours, therefore it is right to pray for all. If the ransom were paid for all, it argues, that it was the intention of the Ransomer, that all should be benefited."<sup>2</sup>

By means principally of adding ethical quality to the sovereign, all powerful God, also secondarily carrying along the idea of the dual nature of man as made by God, first created and then formed, Ballou was able to argue the doctrine closest to his heart, universal salvation. Ballou agreed with Calvinism on the sovereignty of God and on the inability of man to work out his own salvation. He disagreed with Calvinism on the nature of God on all matters pertaining to sin and to the atonement.

Here is, in truth, the foundation of present day Universalist theology. Ballou's ideas of man's inability has been restated and much modified. His ideas of sin and of the atonement have been greatly enlarged and developed, but his idea of God stands today, though shifted into a monistic setting, as the Basis of the Universalist faith.

#### Section B. Idea of Punishment in the Treatise.

We now ask the question as to what Ballou's idea of punishment was, in this system of theology we have just examined. We find this statement including some of his scriptural interpretations to be as follows: "We pass

1. p. 193

2. p. 205

to take notice of II Thessalonians, 1: 7, 8, 9. My opponent depends upon the words 'everlasting destruction', on which to found his argument against the salvation of all men; but as I have before proved, that the word, everlasting, does not necessarily mean an endless duration, my opponent would fail in his argument, even if he could show, that the word, everlasting, in the text, was applied to the duration of suffering; but this he cannot do; for the word, everlasting, is not applied to the duration of punishment, but to the destruction with which the sinner is punished. That which is destroyed, I grant, is endlessly destroyed. But here I call in my key text, to show, that it is the hay, wood and stubble, which are to be destroyed. This will appear evident, if we observe the nature of the fire mentioned in our text. 'And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance,' etc. This fire is that in which Christ is revealed, and it comes from heaven. Is not this fire with which he baptized? Is not the fire revealed, to destroy the hay, the wood and the stubble? Undoubtedly; and is the endless misery of the sinner to be proved, from the action of that divine fire which alone is able to effect his salvation? But the objector says, the text reads for itself: 'Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction; from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power', and if the sinner be punished from the presence of the Lord, he cannot be blessed in it, where there are joys forevermore. Answer: there is not a place in the universe which is out of the presence of an omnipresent God; therefore, to put a sinner from the presence of the Lord, he must be put out of the universe. But what means the text? says the reader; answer, that divine light and heat, which destroys moral darkness, and purges man from all sin is from the presence of the Lord as a production of the divine presence, as it is written concerning the man of sin, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming. If God were not able to punish the sinner, in the manner described in the text, I should despair of his salvation; but blessed be that divine spirit of light and love; it truly takes such vengeance on the sinner as is worthy of a God. It makes him hate sin, brings down high mountains of his pride, takes away the figleaf garment, and clothes the man in his right mind.

There is a passage in the twelfth of Matthew, the thirty first and thirty second verses, which has been contended for as an unanswerable objection to Universal Salvation. The text reads thus: "Therefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.".....

What I have written on this subject will show the reader the propriety of supposing, that the sin, which the Pharisees committed, in blaspheming the Holy Spirit, by which Christ wrought miracles, has been visited upon their descendants even to this day, and will continue upon them, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. But I see no need of carrying the meaning of these words to an endless eternity, or even beyond the experience of man in this natural life. Therefore, admitting the doctrine of future punishment



true, I cannot see it proved, from these words."<sup>1</sup>

Strange as it may seem, this is all that is found in the body of the Treatise itself pertaining to punishment, showing that it was at this time well in the periphery of Ballou's thought. He explains these statements which we have just mentioned more fully in his letter to the reader at the beginning of the work.

"A few sentences, which the reader will find towards the close of this work, which have reference to a punishment after death, may cause him to desire more of my ideas on the subject.

The doctrine of punishment after death, has, by many able writers, been contended for; some of whom have argued such punishment to be endless, and others limited. But it appears to me that they have taken wrong ground who have endeavored to support the latter, as well as those who have labored to prove the former. They have both put great dependence on certain figurative and parabolical expressions, or passages of scripture, which they explain, so as to cause them to allude to such an event. It appears to me, that they have not sufficiently attended to the nature of sin, so as to learn its punishment to be produced from a law of necessity, and not a law of penalty. Had they seen this, they would also have seen, that a perpetuity of punishment must be connected with an equal continuance of sin, on the same principle that an effect is dependent on its cause. Who in the world would contend, that a man who had sinned one year, could expiate his guilt, by sinning five more, with greater turpitude of heart? State the punishment, say a thousand years, for a sinner who dies in unbelief. What is it for? Say for his incorrigibility in this world. Well, does he commit sin during these thousand years? Surely, or he could not be miserable. Then I ask, if it takes a thousand years of punishment in another world, to reward the sinner for, say fifty years of sin in this, how long must he be punished, afterwards, for the sin he commits during the thousand years? The punishment, or sufferings, which we endure, in consequence of sin, is not a dispensation of any penal law, but of the law of necessity, in which law, as long as a cause continues, it produces its effects. Therefore, to prove a man will suffer condemnation for sin, at thirty, forty, or fifty years of age, it would be necessary to prove that he would be a sinner at that time, or those times. So, in order to prove that a man will be miserable, after this mortal life is ended, it must first be proved that he will sin in the next state of existence.

It has been argued, by many, that the doctrine of future punishment, or misery, is a necessary doctrine to dissuade men from committing sin, which surely surprises me. To tell a person who is in love of sin, that if he does not immediately refrain, he will have to continue in sin for a long time, would be true, be-sure; but would be void of force to dissuade him from what he is in love with. I believe, that as long as man sin, they will be miserable,



be that time longer or shorter; and as soon as they cease from sin, they begin to experience divine enjoyment."<sup>1</sup>

Here we observe plainly that Ballou's conception of punishment is remedial and consequential, while the Calvinistic conception was arbitrary and vindictive. That it is remedial, as sent by God, instead of being vindictive depends of course upon the new attributes of love and ethical quality imputed to God by Ballou. The other aspect, the perception that punishment was not an arbitrary penalty, but rather the necessary and inevitable consequence of sin is a true moral insight. Strange indeed that Ballou did not perceive by his observation of human life about him that the consequences of sin do not by any means cease with the cessation of the sin itself, but may continue long after the reestablishment of harmonious relations between the man and God, which last aspect of the matter was the one upon which Ballou centered his mind. Apparently the subject rested at this point in Mr. Ballou's mind for several years hereafter.

#### Section C. Ballou's Idea of Punishment. 1805-1817

During this period we find two references which tell us further Ballou's thought on punishment. One, his article in 1812 on the passage in I Peter on the spirits in prison. On this passage Ballou says, after a long discussion:

"It was the gospel that was preached, and it was preached to those who were not in the flesh, that they might be judged as if they were in the flesh, but that they might live according to God in the Spirit; even that Spirit which quickened Christ and gave him power to bring us to God. In this subject there is not the least ambiguity, nor is there any other difficulty than that it is as plain and direct a contradiction of the commonly-received opinion, that is, that there is no mercy to be communicated to those who die in unreconciliation to God, or in unbelief of the gospel, - as can possibly be stated".<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whittemore: Life of Ballou, Vol. I. pp. 368, 369

We note, as our biographers correctly inform us, that Ballou allowed this passage to take a meaning which would include future punishment, although he does not specifically state that.

The other glimpse into Ballou's thought during this period is also near the year 1812. It was when Mr. Ballou found what he believed to be the proper meaning of Heb. 9:27, 28, - "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." This passage, which had always been understood to mean the future judgment, was constantly in Mr. Ballou's mind at this time, and finally he came upon the following interpretation, which he felt was the true one. "He saw that the men mentioned were the men or priests who offered sacrifices under the law, and died in form for the sins of the people; so (that is, for a like purpose) Christ was once offered to bear the sins of mankind."<sup>1</sup> Whittemore, his biographer, says:

"The result to which Mr. Ballou came in regard to this matter, we think, had some effect upon him, to lead him to suspect that the doctrine of future punishment was not a matter of divine revelation at all. If this passage, which was one of the leading texts in proof of a judgment after death, had no reference to that subject whatsoever, might it not be possible, and even probable, that other passages, which had long been applied in the same manner, would be found, if carefully examined, equally inapplicable to that subject? Perhaps it was about that time that the first doubt came over him whether the passage concerning 'the spirits in prison' was not misapplied when referred to the immortal state. It had become perfectly clear to him that Hebrews 9:27, 28 had no reference whatsoever to the common doctrine of a judgment in a future state. He thought, perhaps, that by a careful examination the same fact would be deduced concerning the other passages. This, however, is to be regarded as merely a probable conjecture."<sup>2</sup>

Ballou himself tells us in the letter he wrote to Whittemore in 1829

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1. Whittemore, Ibid. p. 382

2. p. 386

that until 1817 when the controversy began, he had never made up his mind as to the matter of future punishment definitely. His words are these:

"Respecting the doctrine of a future state of retribution, there was, in my youth, but little said. Universalists having obtained satisfaction that none of the human race would suffer endless punishment, thought they had sufficient reason to rejoice with exceeding joy, and to glory in the mercy of God. I never made the question a subject of close investigation until lately. When I wrote my Notes on the Parables, (1804) and my Treatise on Atonement (1805), I had travelled, in my mind, away from penal sufferings, so entirely, that I was satisfied that if any suffered in the future state, it would be because they would be sinful in that state. But I cannot say that I was fully satisfied, that the Bible taught no punishment in the future world, until I obtained this satisfaction by attending to the subject with Brother Edward Turner, then of Charlestown. For the purpose of satisfying ourselves respecting the doctrine of the scriptures, on this question, we agreed to do the best we could; he in favor of future punishment, and I the contrary. Our investigations were published in a periodical, called The Gospel Visitant. While attending to this correspondence, I became entirely satisfied, that the scriptures begin and end the history of sin in flesh and blood; and that beyond this mortal existence the Bible teaches no other sentient state but that which is called by the blessed name of life and immortality.

When I sat down to reply to Brother Turner, who urged the passage in Peter, respecting the spirits in prison, I knew not by what means I could explain the text without allowing it to favor the doctrine of future sufferings. I had, at that time, no knowledge of any translations of the text, but the one in our common version. - But reading the whole subject, in connection, the light broke in on my mind, and I was satisfied that Peter alluded to the Gentiles, by spirits in prison, which made the passage agree with Isaiah 42d.<sup>1</sup>

We know from Ballou's controversy with Foster in 1791-99, that his mind was not settled on the question of future punishment. We know from his Treatise in 1805, as well as from his treatment of these passages in 1812, that his mind still was not thoroughly settled, yet it is true that his mind was travelling away from the thought of future punishment. But whether there was or was not future punishment was of so little significance in his theological scheme that he could live twenty years at least, (1797-1817) and preach, teach and write as a Universalist minister without ever making up his mind, and coming to a definite, hard and fast conclusion, on this subject.  
1. Whittamores: Modern History of Universalism, pp. 437, 438 footnote.

## CHAPTER II

## The Controversy, 1817-1840

Since the doctrine of future punishment was a matter of only secondary concern to the then leader of the denomination and to judge from the silence on the subject, was also of but slight concern to the other leaders and to the laymen and women, why and how should the one great controversy of the Universalist history arise on the matter of future punishment?

## Section A. Opinions in the Denomination. 1817

So far as we can discover, the opinion in the denomination was not at all settled regarding the doctrine of future punishment, but perhaps, if one author is correct, inclined toward the doctrine of no future punishment. Dr. Ballou II in his occasional sermon at the United States Convention of 1847, is reported to have said as follows: "I can remember the time when the single truth, that the grace of God through Jesus Christ, insured the salvation of all men, actually answered our need, not only for doctrine, but for spiritual influence also. It broke upon men's hearts, as well as upon their understanding, with overwhelming transforming power. Coming out suddenly from under the dark cloud which the doctrine of endless misery had stretched over heaven and earth, the soul was melted into joy, love, and boundless gratitude, at the thought that God would save all. That was the electric point, which fired the public mind and flashed out a broad light on the whole field of man's relation with his Maker. It served and it served well for the theme of the pulpit, month after month and year after year. It was always fresh. Mothers and fathers, youths and maidens, old hardfaced men, wept for joy at the message, and dwelt upon it in their homes and in their business, and spoke of it to everybody; they could not keep silence, their hearts were so full."<sup>1</sup>

This Dr. Ballou was born in 1796, was ordained in 1816, just one year before this controversy began. It seems that he may have recorded quite accurately the sentiment of the denomination at that time. Again, Thomas Whittemore, who was a doughty fighter on the side of no future punishment, 1. Rev. G. W. Whitney: *Doctrinal Phases of Universalism during the Past Century*, Universalist Quarterly, July, 1872, p. 319

says in his Modern History of Universalism, (pp. 434, 435): "The doctrine of limited future punishment, as a distinct question, has never excited a very general interest. For twenty years a difference of opinion has existed on this point; but the difference in itself has not been the cause of alienation of feeling, or disruption of fellowship." This was written in 1829, just a year or two before the disruption of fellowship and after a large part of the doctrinal controversy had taken place. Still we note Whittmore himself says that the question has never excited a very general interest. Speaking of this same period Rev. A. St. John Chambre says: "The great body of Universalists had come to rest upon the doctrine of no punishment in the future world."<sup>1</sup> Another and quite valuable bit of evidence that the majority sentiment of the denomination was for no future punishment is found in the words of Adin Ballou. He was one of the group who seceded from the denomination on the question of future punishment, - he and his group upholding it. He says:

"And I venture to say that in respect to the doctrine of future discipline,.....the Universalist denomination is much nearer what we set out to make our association, than like its former self, when we seceded."<sup>2</sup>

#### Section B. How the Controversy Started, 1817-1818

Under these circumstances we naturally ask how any controversy became started. It was started, probably, by a third party, Rev. Jacob Wood, a Universalist and a believer in future punishment. He was very anxious to see the subject of future punishment opened up, and probably suspected that Mr. Ballou was far from any thorough belief in future punishment. It is affirmed that he brought up the subject to Mr. Ballou. At least we know that Mr. Ballou wrote to Mr. Edward Turner as follows:

"Dear Brother: The question whether the doctrine of a future state

1. Hosea Ballou and Edward Turner, by Rev. A. St. J. Chambre, Universalist Quarterly, January, 1873, p. 41

2. Eddy: Universalism in America, Vol. II, p. 338

of punishment be a doctrine taught in the Scriptures, is proposed for candid discussion.

That this subject is of a magnitude justly to claim the serious attention and impartial examination of the believer in divine revelation, no doubt can be entertained....

No doubt considerable success might attend the well-directed researches of an individual unassisted by a fellow-laborer; but as the human mind, never becomes acquainted with its own resources until opposition and difficulties call them into action, it is believed that in the proposed investigation 'two are better than one'.

Though at first it might seem that the two who are to conduct this investigation, should be of opposite sentiments on the subject to be argued, on more mature consideration a thought suggests itself, that the inquiry would be more likely to be kept free from improper warmth or injudicious zeal, were the parties of the same opinion, than if they were of opposite sentiments....

Not only to ourselves might the proposed inquiry result in useful acquirements, but even to others, for whom we live, and for whom we delight to labor.

Should the foregoing suggestions have the weight in your mind as they bear in mine, you have the privilege of choosing the side of the proposed question that you should prefer to vindicate, and come as directly to the merits of the argument as you think proper, and leave the other to be vindicated by me. Yours affectionately, Hosea Ballou."

In reply Mr. Turner wrote:

"I received by Brother W. (Brother Wood, the instigator) your proposal for a friendly investigation of the subject of a future punishment. I am pleased that you have made such a proposal, not because I think myself so adequate to conduct my part of the inquiry as many others, but because I wish to inform myself more of the real state of the question than I think I know now or can know without some effort at inquiry....I will frankly acknowledge that I have ever been inclined more to the doctrine of a future punishment, than to the opposite idea; hence....I shall endeavor to prove that there is a balance of evidence for believing in a future state of punishment; upon the presumption that I shall answer my own mind best, on the point to which I am most inclined."<sup>1</sup>

Scanning these fourteen epistles, we find in the verbiage some threads of argument. Mr. Turner proposes this for a test question: "Does death necessarily produce such a moral change in the mind of the sinner as to make

1. Eddy: Universalism in America, Vol. II, pp. 262-263



him at once a willing, obedient, happy subject of the moral kingdom?"

Mr. Ballou, in reply, is not willing to accept the question in a form conceding such power to death; affirming that "at the dissolution of the natural corruptible body the Saviour of sinners, who has conquered death and him who had the power of death, may do what death could not effect, and clothe the subject of his grace in his right mind, as he did the man among the tombs?" Here this thread is dropped. Mr. Turner takes up another, affirming that as one may suffer for sins committed a year before, there may be by the same law of memory painful consequences of sin carried forward into the future life. Mr. Ballou replies: "That the powers of man can remain for a year without temptation, without being led into sin, and without being liable to be led into sin, and yet suffer for sins committed before this period, surely needs some evidence." Mr. Turner responds with the statement that the brethren of Joseph painfully remembered their sin of years before, and their regret was apparently not occasioned by sins afterward committed; Paul also had painful regret for his crime of persecution long after his experience of repentance, conversion, and divine forgiveness. Mr. Ballou affirms in reply that regret is not identical with guilt or punishment; also that the immortal state is such a complete deliverance from the limits of mortality that we are not justified in adhering very closely to the earthly analogy.

So the thread is sent back and forth, as in a shuttle on a loom, and the fabric of controversy is woven.

Mr. Turner is at length constrained to say: "That I have never had much claim to the character of close investigator, and still less to that of a deep controvertist, are circumstances with which you are perfectly familiar?" He is apologizing for the open secret that he is conducting his argument with

worrisome feebleness. Mr. Ballou rejoins in these over+generous words:

"To me it is entirely inconceivable how an argument could be better managed than the one you have adduced to prove that the guilt and condemnation of sin not only may be but actually are protracted around the existence of sin itself." We misjudge if we think him satirical. His esteem for his opponent's ability was unfeigned. He believed his argument had been skillfully conducted. He thought the argument, however, insufficient to support the doctrine of future punishment.

Mr. Turner, as a new thread, refers to the passage in I Peter 3: 18-20, where Christ is spoken of as once suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, and went also and preached unto the spirits in prison, which were sometimes disobedient. Mr. Ballou is at once touched and aroused. He has in a previous issue of the Gospel Visitant expounded this intricate passage. He has maintained its obvious import to be that the people who were on earth in the days of Noah were in a prisoned condition in the invisible world at the time of the crucifixion of Christ, and that Jesus then went to preach to them the emancipating gospel. This is, of course, to assume the existence of sin and punishment in the spiritual state. He now sets resolutely about a review of his former exposition. He conceives the meaning may be that Christ in the power of his resurrection preached to imprisoned Gentile souls, - souls imprisoned in sin, prejudice, and ignorance. He finds the prophecies of Christ's work in the earth as an opener of prison doors that the oppressed may go free. He becomes, without pretense, convinced that he has found the right clue to the perplexing passage. He is soon entirely certain of the correctness of his new rendering.

His exposition is lengthy, full, yet concise; he is, as respects debating power, himself again....

This virtually ended the controversy. Mr. Turner made some objections; his tone assumed a quality of slight petulance. Mr. Ballou easily disposed of the objections offered; it is evident he now argued without assumption and in self-enjoyment. The correspondence closed with the cessation of the publication of the Gospel Visitant. That the controversial honors, whatever the merit of the cause, are to be conceded to Mr. Ballou, must be the voice of acclaim."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that the controversy was occasioned, not as a matter of necessity, but was deliberately begun for the sake of argumentation by two ministers of that time, who undoubtedly knew each other's preference and trend of thought before beginning. Ballou, as we have noted, records that his final decision against future punishment came in his reconsideration of the verses of I Peter 3. His interpretation made of his own accord in the course of his own study five years previously, had allowed future punishment. But having been challenged in controversy he built a new interpretation, which disallowed a state of future judgment and punishment, and then, strange to say, Ballou believed it as the only true interpretation.

#### Section C. Progress of the Controversy to 1824

Although Ballou had now reached a final decision on the subject of future punishment, he was not at all anxious to speak his mind on all possible occasions. We have two proofs of this in 1819, after the first part of the controversy had completely ceased. One proof is the fact that he became editor of a new publication called The Universalist Magazine, and some of his

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1. Safford: Hosesa Ballou, pp. 145-148

followers in the matter of no future punishment were much disappointed that his attitude in the magazine seemed "reserved". A second proof is in the fact that as soon as this magazine started a Unitarian publication, called the Boston Kaleidoscope, began attacking the Universalist Magazine. The controversy continued some little time. Finally the editor of the Kaleidoscope said he had "not yet been able to understand whether Mr. Ballou believes in any future punishment, or none at all", and he added:

"If he merely believes the final restoration, so-called, he stands on very different ground from what we have supposed. Until this point is ascertained we deem it useless, if not worse, to continue the controversy. If not inconsistent with his views and feelings, we respectfully request him to inform us and the public on this point."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we note that during a discussion with the editor of this magazine Ballou's views on future punishment were not definitely stated.

It may be well to note Mr. Ballou's answer as giving his attitude toward the whole subject and his conception of its relative importance.

"There seems to appear some strong intimations in what he has here stated, that he has no objection to the doctrine of the salvation of all men finally if a future punishment be allowed for a time. He says: 'If he merely believes the final restoration.' This form of expression would indicate that he has no particular objections to make if this be the doctrine. Well, we will receive him on this ground with all cordiality. If we will allow that all mankind shall finally be reconciled to God, love and enjoy him through the power of his grace revealed in him who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, we will not disagree about the times and seasons which God holds in his own power, nor will we disagree on the quantity or duration of that chastisement which our heavenly Father may administer for the sinner's profit.

But he says, if we allow any future punishment we stand on 'very different ground' from what he expected. We will endeavor to show him and our readers, that the ground or principle is the same in both cases, that is, the Universalist who believes that this mortal state, in flesh and blood, is the only state of sin and misery, stands on the same principle as does his brother, who believes that there may be a future state of discipline, which will eventuate in bringing all sinners to a state of holiness and happiness.

Neither difference respecting the time when the creature is to be made happy, nor the particular means by which this event is brought about, makes the least difference in principle. Two brothers, sons of the same father, may perfectly agree in their sentiments respecting their parent. They both believe that he will not fail to give them all the instruction

1. Eddy. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 270

they need, that his discipline over them is all designed for their benefit; and yet they may entertain different views respecting time and means. One may think that they are to be kept at school until they are eighteen, the other may be of the mind that they are to be continued under tutors and governors a year longer, yet both believe that their father knows best and will order their concerns according to his own wisdom and goodness. He who believes that all sufferings end with this mortal state, and he who believes that they end at the expiration of any other period, differ only as it respects time, not as it respects principle, for both believe that all discipline is for the good of the punished, and therefore the sentiment is the same....

Why does not our friend act on the noble principle which would lead him to say, I cannot prove either by Bible or reason that all men may not finally be saved, but I think that future limited punishment may be supported. Then if we disagreed at all, it would not be on principle, it would only be concerning time, ways and means....

But after all, will it do to answer the question? There would be no danger, if we could say, we believe in a state of future punishment; that is, if no one would call on us to prove it from the scriptures. But there lies the difficulty. We are sensible we cannot prove that sin and misery will exist in a future state of being."<sup>1</sup>

Turning to the sermons of Mr. Ballou during this period, we find that he preached but infrequently on the subject, and always with the positive emphasis on present punishment. In a sermon on Heb. 9:27-28, preached in his own church in Boston, in February, 1818, he closes as follows:

"Before this discourse is closed, it is necessary to make some remarks on what the opposers are endeavoring to insinuate against these plain and glorious truths of the gospel.

They are not disposed to meet these things in the way of open and candid investigation; but they will go from house to house, and from ear to ear, and whisper about licentious doctrine. They will endeavor to stop the people's ears and blind their eyes, lest they hear with their ears, and see with their eyes and be converted.

What, no future judgment! Is there to be no distinction in the world to come, between the righteous and the wicked? Are saints and sinners all to fare alike? It is then no matter what we do? We may indulge without restraint in all manner of iniquity. We may neglect the duties of religion; lie, steal, defraud; indulge in drunkenness and gluttony, together with base uncleanness, and all is just as well....Such is the dust these enemies of the gospel throw into the air.

1. Eddy: Ibid. pp. 270-272

'Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' Notice carefully: 'he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.' He must receive his wages from the master he serves; he must reap his harvest where he sows his seed.

Go to our prisons and places of correction; you will find hundreds who believe in a day of judgment in the next world, and have no doubts that punishment everlasting will be inflicted on the wicked, accordingly as they have been educated to believe; but they all intend to repent before they die, and that is early enough according to the argument of our opposers. These miserable wretches believe as they have been taught; and they act as if they were fully convinced, that religion, virtue, justice, temperance, and godliness were nothing but so many obstructions to their present happiness, and of no use this side the eternal world....

The religion of Jesus is represented by many beautiful figures; such as bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, a feast of fat things for all people.

Would a hungry person refuse a feast of fat things unless he were threatened with everlasting condemnation in the future state? Would one on the burning sands of Arabia, parched with thirst and scorched with a vertical sun, on finding the shadow of a great rock, at whose base flows a living spring, refuse this exquisite refreshment, unless he were threatened with everlasting torments in another world?

After all, what is this religion which is founded on the fear of future misery? Is there any real sincerity in it? Is there any of the true love of God in this religion? 'Perfect love casts out fear; he that feareth is not made perfect in love.' You provide for your companions and your dependant offspring because you love them, and your duty is perfect delight. Can you honestly say, that you would not give your children bread when they are hungry, if you were not afraid of everlasting punishment hereafter?

Away with this deception. Let us learn to love God because he has first loved us; let us cautiously obey his commandments, in keeping of which there is great reward.\*1

On the first Sunday in December, 1819, Ballou delivered in his home church a sermon entitled; Men Rewarded According to their Works in the Present Life. And two weeks later, it was followed by its mate: "The Sinner meets with deserved Punishment, in this life. There is nothing new in these sermons in the way of arguments or illustrations.

1. Hosea Ballou: Select Sermons, Boston, 1832. pp. 19-21



In the winter of 1821-1822 Ballou preached a series of eleven sermons in Philadelphia. These were afterwards published and most happily give us a conception of Ballou's preaching at this time, so few years after having come to the conviction that there was no future punishment. Let us see how he preaches, on or near this point.

The first and perhaps most surprising fact which we note upon reading the sermon is that there is no express teaching on a no future punishment doctrine in any form. Since he believed it, as we well know, and yet did not preach it, what did he preach?

"What God requires of the disobedient is obedience, and that is all." "But does it not inflict punishment?" says the hearer. "Will not this law subject the transgressor to punishment?" Yes, my hearers, it does. The proposition is essential to the doctrine: but bear in mind this one thing. That a God of infinite wisdom never would and never could consistently with his law, introduce a penalty calculated to effectuate disobedience in the end."<sup>1</sup>

"But the law of love is perfect, as it administers its punishment to bring transgressors to obedience. That is the perfection of the law of God. You will find this to be the fact by your observation and experience in society. For if you deviate from this law of love, you will find disobedience and trouble so inseparably connected, that any deviation from the love of God, and from the love of mankind operates to your disadvantage. What is this more than to tell us the moment we disobey: 'Child, you have done wrong, you have gone astray from your own felicity, there is but one way for you to regain that felicity, and that is to return to your duty. Love your God, and love your neighbor as yourself.'"<sup>2</sup>

In speaking of Jesus he says:

"He did not come into the world to suffer the penalty of the law instead of us. If so, we could sin without suffering, but who can do this? What sin can you commit without suffering a corresponding evil from it, and does not our Father in heaven say he will reward everyone according to his works? And does not Jesus say 'Render to everyone according to his works?' He did not come into the world that we might not suffer if we commit sin. Sin and misery are necessarily connected in the nature of things; and if we do sin, we must suffer for it."<sup>3</sup>

1. The Eleven Sermons, which were preached by the Rev. Hosea Ballou...p. 31

2. Ibid. p. 32

3. Ibid. pp. 47-48

Again:

"Has not God ordained that the wicked shall suffer for their sins? Are not our laws in existence for this purpose? Do we not see that the penal laws of the country sentence some to die on the gallows for their sin, while some for their wickedness are shut up in the penitentiary? and no one can lead a life of wickedness without being wretched and disgraced. Will we say God does not punish sin where sin is? The wrath of God is revealed, that is to say, some time or other will be revealed, against all the wickedness and unrighteousness of man. It is revealed, and we know by experience, by observation, and by history, that sin has made this world miserable, and it is recorded in scripture that 'The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner.' This shows that punishment for sin does exist."<sup>1</sup>

In a sermon by request on Psalms 9:17:

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God", he says, "We want to know whether this hell, in its proper sense, can be in this world, or is it in another world exclusively? Well, my friends, I expect to give you perfect satisfaction on this subject, if you are perfectly attentive and candid. The testimony of the same writer is what I shall adduce to prove, that the hell, of which he speaks, is in this world, and we do no violence to his language so to explain it." (Balleu then goes on to cite other verses from the Psalms, such as 'Grant is thy mercy, O Lord, for thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell', as proof that "every individual who listens to the voice of folly and deviates from the felicitous paths of wisdom and righteousness finds himself in the lowest depths of hell.")<sup>2</sup>

"It is contended, by a deluded ministry, that God does not reward virtue and holiness in the earth, but keeps back the reward until his children shall enter another world. Is this true? Now I appeal to your own observations and do look away from yourselves, if you are not pleased to observe yourselves. Look at those who are wretched and miserable, destitute of friends in the world, the most degraded souls who have not even the consolation of a good conscience, nor the esteem of society at large. I ask you, Have they got into this miserable situation by their well doing? Do honestly answer me this question.....No; you know to the contrary. You know it was their deception, their idleness, their want of economy, giving themselves up to their blind passions, and following after sinful pleasures. When you look at a dissipated young man, do you not feel an emotion of pity and grief when you see him ruining himself? What is the cause of this? Why, his vain appetites. He will soon be by the wall, and he is seen staggering about the streets. Can there be a worse hell than this? If you want to see a worse hell, go into that dear family where distress is heightened by family broils; where misery is brought on by the disobedience of

1. Ibid. p. 49

2. Ibid. pp. 98,99

children to parents, and the unkindness of parents to children.....All such misery is hell; the world is full of it. Some are, just turning in, - some, just turning out; and we pray, and fervently pray God to keep them out of this condition. It is the inevitable consequence of transgression; and I tell you, old and young, as well as the middle aged, if you transgress, if you do wrong, you must suffer for it."<sup>1</sup>

Such are the passages found in these sermons, stressing the certainty of punishment for sin in the present life, but neither denying or affirming punishment for sin in any future state of existence. But the emphasis on present consequence of sin and the utter silence concerning future punishment has been sufficient to leave the keen listener in the conviction that Mr. Ballou believed in no future punishment.

We note also in these sermons passages which show that Ballou's idea of the nature of man had changed.

"My friends, it is of importance that we understand that there is no power, no ability, no nature in man, but what is good. It is as good as it ought to be, and to say that the nature of man is bad, is to look directly up to our Maker, and accuse him of having done, all the evil mankind have done. It is the wrong use of our ability, that is the cause of all the wrong we are guilty of; not the ability itself that is wrong. It is not nature itself that is wrong, but it is the wrong use of all the abilities we possess, that constitutes all the sinfulness in us."<sup>2</sup>

"My brethren, to improve our subject to advantage, let us all remember that we are by nature such beings as God would have us; and that all the sin that attaches to us, results from the misapplication of the abilities and faculties that God gave us. I would encourage you in this, because I would not have natural society so much disgraced, as to have it supposed that mankind while blessed with reason and understanding, though in a state of simple nature, are not able to do right."<sup>3</sup>

Here we see that Ballou has travelled far from his original thought of man being first created in Christ Jesus and then formed of the dust of the earth, according to a law of sin which him helpless in his bondage.

The Universalist Magazine, founded in 1819, as we have stated, went

1. Ibid. pp. 101,102

2. Ibid. p. 58

3. Ibid. p. 65

on for two years. Then the state of Mr. Ballou's health forced him to give up the editorship. During that two years there appears to have been only one very brief mention by himself of his views concerning future punishment. Under the next editor, who unfortunately knew nothing of Universalism, several parties wrote in, some for and some against future punishment, and started up quite a controversy. Ballou was only one of quite a large group eagerly controverting. Shortly the party arguing for future punishment began to call themselves Restorationists. They began also to feel that they were unfairly discriminated against in the magazine. At this juncture Hosea Ballou again took the editorship with Rev. Hosea Ballou II and Rev. Thomas Whittemore, all of whom upheld the doctrine of no future punishment. The arguments pro and con began to wax ever hotter in tone as the Restorationists' sense of injustice steadily increased. At about this time we have a communication preserved to us, which is valuable.

"Reverend Editors: I have been for some time a reader and supporter of your paper and have observed with deep solicitude the controversy which has been conducted in your columns, on the subject of future misery. I learn that there is difference of opinion on this subject, among those who are denominated Universalists. It appears that some believe in a disciplinary punishment beyond death, and others believe that all human misery is confined to this life. I must candidly confess, that I have hitherto been in favor of the former opinion; but if the contrary doctrine can be fairly proved from scripture, I would most heartily embrace it....What I have hitherto seen written on the subject, does not appear to meet the real ground of controversy (this was written in 1822) The question, as I understand it, is, Whether all human misery is bounded by death? Now, in my apprehension, this question has not been directly discussed. To be sure, I have seen another question agitated, which is somewhat allied to it, viz. Whether sin will exist in a future state? But this does not meet the point at issue. For if it cannot be proved that men will commit fresh actual sins in a future state, it will not, I think, follow of necessity, that they cannot be miserable. Whether men will, or will not, commit fresh actual sins in a future state, I think cannot be demonstrated by revelation. But, if it be conceded, that they will cease to be actual sinners, the conclusion does not appear logical to my mind, that the very moment they cease to be such, their misery will end. However, with our present imperfect knowledge of a future state, this inquiry,

at best, is a matter of mere speculation. I cannot rest my faith on any conclusion drawn from such uncertain and indefinite premises.

I should like to see the subject met in a direct form, and the evidence adduced to prove that all misery is confined to this life. If any person will do this, I should be very grateful for his labors. If anyone should attempt it, I hope it will be done with candor and fairness. I do not wish to be informed that sinners are punished, more or less, in this life, for this is manifest from scripture and experience. But I want the evidence that all misery is confined to this state of existence; or, that every sinner is adequately punished in this life for every sin which he commits. This is the just form of the inquiry. There is quite a difference between the two propositions, that vice is punished in this life, or the wicked are recompensed in the earth; and that all misery is confined to this life, or that all sinners are punished adequately for every sin in this world. The former proposition may be proved, and the latter remain unproved.

In answer to my inquiry, I do not expect to be turned off with the plea, that the scriptures are silent in favor of a future misery. This would be to no effect. I wish to see the evidence, if any there be in the Bible, to prove that all human suffering is restricted to this life.

As I have a strong desire to see this doctrine proved true, I shall consider that person as one of my best friends, who shall succeed in doing it. (Signed) Lover of Truth."<sup>1</sup>

This was printed in the magazine with the following remarks by the editors:

"We think that on reconsidering the foregoing request, and taking into view all its bearings, our correspondent will perceive that it does not offer a proper and just ground of discussion. The request is, that the whole discussion of the doctrine of future misery, be decided on no other condition than this, viz. that it be proved, positively and directly, that all misery is confined to this life. This is, to say the least, throwing all the labor on one side; and that side the one that is impeached;.....

Nor is this all: our correspondent gives us to understand that should the request (so unreasonable, as it appears to us) be accepted, even then no proof must be drawn from the supposed fact that the scriptures say nothing in favor of future misery. It will be allowed as no proof. And again; he will not allow any proof to be drawn from the fact that the righteous are recompensed in this life, and that the wicked are also. Nor yet will he grant that any proof may be adduced from the statement that sin will not exist in a future state, allowing such statement to be true."<sup>2</sup>

The Lover of Truth wrote an answer to this which was not published

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1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II. pp. 279-280

2. Ibid: Vol. II, pp. 280-281

in the paper, The Universalist Magazine. Instead, the magazine gave notice that the whole controversy must be closed. The Restorationists sent their whole side of the case, all their documents, and the proof of the injustice they claimed had been done them, to Rev. S. C. Loveland, publisher of the Christian Repository, a Universalist magazine printed at Woodstock, Vermont. He printed the material they desired in the form of An Appeal, following which was a declaration "To the World":

"The writer of this, and several of his brethren, who agree with him in opinion, have long viewed, with deep regret, the modern corruption of the genuine doctrine of the restoration of all men, and this corruption appearing to be seated and growing among the order of Universalists in the United States, and believing that it is a great hindrance to the reception and spread of the truth,....considering it as a duty which they owe to God, their own consciences, and their fellow creatures, to publish to the world the following declaration:

1. That, in our opinion, the doctrine of universal salvation, at the commencement of a future state, and that of the final restoration of all men by Jesus Christ, through faith and repentance, are distinct and different doctrines, and are incapable of being reconciled together;

2. That we consider the former doctrine to be subversive of a just sense of our accountability to God, and the proper distinction between virtue and vice, and, consequently lessens the motives to virtue, and gives force to the temptations of sin.

Explanatory Remarks. The first article supposes a difference between the two systems in the method or means of salvation. The principle on which the doctrine of immediate universal salvation is founded, as far as we can learn from its advocates, is the native and essentially immaculate nature of the soul. The suffering of the soul wholly arises and is dependent on its union with the present body, and when that is dislodged, it is, of its essential nature, free from all pollution and suffering. This is no new theory, as it was embraced by many ancient heathen philosophers. Now, it requires no great capacity to perceive, that this doctrine sets aside the scheme of salvation by Christ....

It is also easy to be seen, that this doctrine leaves out the means of faith and repentance, as requisites for the possession and enjoyment of salvation. Those who die impenitent are immediately introduced into a state of perfect happiness and glory, not because they were previously prepared by the exercise of faith and repentance, but from the very nature of their existence, which will not admit any suffering...."1

1. Eddy: Ibid. pp. 294-290



The editors of the other three Universalist magazines were requested to insert the above in their work. Consequently, the editors of The Universalist Magazine did so, and prefaced it with the following from the pen of the Rev. Hosea Ballou:

"....Christian brethren, it is a most painful, heart-agonizing task to put into your hands what we know must produce in you surprise and grief of no ordinary character; but you are assured that this gall and wormwood has for years been tasted by those who saw the first germ of this root of bitterness. Yes, the shade of many a night has witnessed the anguish which preyed on the heart of him who writes this notice, and his pillow has received the tears of grief occasioned by the increasing symptoms which portended the unhappy schism which is now made manifest to the public. We expect the daughters of the uncircumcised will triumph; but what is this in comparison with those inward sighs, which force our tears on the defection of those we love! Let us, with confidence, rely on Him whose invisible hand worketh all things, after the counsel of his own will - and in our hearts say, 'Not our will, but thine, O God, be done.'"<sup>1</sup>

This brings us to the beginning of 1823. At the end of the same year the Association meeting at Milford, Massachusetts, drew up a proposal "most cordially" to "acknowledge and accept as Christian ministers and brethren, such as differ from us on the subjects of doctrine maintained in the above named publications." This was accepted by the Association and signed by the Restoration ministers there present and the affair seemed to have been terminated. And indeed the airing of the discussion in The Universalist Magazine ceased.

#### Section D. A New Aspect of the Controversy, 1824-1835

The discussion was now largely dropped, as we have said, in the magazine. But it was carried on in the publication of pamphlets and books on one side and on the other. The first important book of the period is entitled "A Series of Letters addressed to Rev. Hosea Ballou of Boston, being a Vindication of the Doctrine of a Future Retribution, against the principal

1. Eddy: Ibid. p. 292

Arguments used by him, Mr. Balfour, and others", by Charles Hudson, pastor of a church in Westminster, Massachusetts, 1827. The author furnishes, with an excellent and orderly presentation of his own side of the case, the best, most logical, most full and orderly presentation of the opposite side of the case! Hence we shall review it with some care.

The presuppositions upon which the whole matter rests are stated by Hudson as follows: 1

"That men are accountable for their actions to the Author of their being, is plainly taught in the scriptures, and demonstrated by universal experience. To assert the contrary is downright Atheism. If there is a God then, to whom we are accountable, it presupposes that he has given us a law as the rule of our conduct; and a law supposes a penalty which must be inflicted in case of transgression. The very idea of accountability, therefore, teaches us that virtue will be rewarded and vice punished, here or hereafter. Rewards and punishments grow necessarily out of accountability; and all the punishments inflicted by God are founded upon the same principle. Now if it be cruel in God to punish men according to their deeds in a future state, it is equally so in the present. And on the other hand, if punishment apportioned to our deserts, inflicted in this world, be not only just, but merciful, then punishment founded on the same principles, will be just and merciful in a future state. We do not pretend that punishment in a future state, differs either in nature or design from punishment inflicted in this world. Men after death are not punished on the principles of revenge or retaliation, but with a design to humble and reform; or, in other words, to qualify the creature for the enjoyment of happiness. We do not believe that those will be punished in a future state, who have been duly punished, and have become penitent here; no, this discipline will be experienced by none but those who have not been equitably recompensed in this state, and who go out of the world in rebellion."1.

Hudson then states the question: "Is all misery confined to this life or does it extend beyond death?"2

The second chapter, or letter as it is called, is a statement and examination of Mr. Ballou's system. By quotations from the Treatise and quotations from the earlier period of the controversy, etc. Mr. Hudson brings forward absolute proof that the heart of Mr. Ballou's system is "Man possesses two natures, or principles, soul and body; the one pure, the other"

1. pp. 11, 12

2. p. 160

impure. All sin originates in the flesh, and when the soul is dislodged from the body, it is necessarily pure, and consequently happy."<sup>1</sup> A distinction found by Ballou in Genesis between the creation of man and his subsequent formation is thoroughly set forth and exploded by showing a thousand absurdities into which this theory would lead.

"The gross mistake into which I conceive you have fallen, arises from considering the second chapter of Genesis a continuation of the history begun in the first, Instead of its being a continuation of the first chapter, it appears to be only an explanation or supplement to the same account. In the first chapter Moses has given a summary account of man's creation; in the second he has given the same account in detail."<sup>2</sup>

The next subject considered is the postulate from this doctrine of creation and formation frequently stated by Ballou in these words: "All sin originated in the flesh." This is answered by Hudson:

"It is so obvious that sin lies in the motive of the mind, and not in the act of the body, that it seems a waste of time to labor this point any further. You yourself when your system is out of view, contend for the principle I here advocate. When opposing the infinity of sin, you say 'it will be granted on all sides, that no action, unconnected with design, ought to be considered sin; it is then an evil intention that constitutes an evil action.'<sup>3</sup>

The second postulate of this main theory is of course that "the soul is eternally and immortally pure". In reply to this Hudson adduces scriptural passages which show that sin arises from an evil disposition or a corrupt mind, nor merely from the flesh. He then goes on:

"But it matters not where sin originates; if the soul participates and becomes an accomplice with the body, as you have acknowledged, again and again, it is sinful; it is corrupt, and the dissolution of the body can render it neither holy nor happy. And if the soul acquiesces and becomes an accomplice with the body, it is as culpable as though sin originated in the soul itself. So if it could be proved that all sin originates in the flesh, it would not afford you any relief."<sup>4</sup>

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1. p. 18

2. p. 28

3. p. 35

4. p. 43

Then the various methods of salvation implied and also stated now at one time and now at another by Ballou are taken up in order. First, salvation consists simply in throwing off the body. That can easily be disproved and discredited. Second, "To avoid this difficulty, perhaps you may say that men are not saved by death, but by divine instruction imparted by Christ after death. Then let us hear no more of the boasted assertions, that the soul is necessarily happy at death; that our appetites and passions being destroyed, sin and its consequences must necessarily cease; and that death places us beyond the reach of pain. If men are saved by being instructed after death, the main ground of the controversy is changed, and the arguments on which you have mostly relied, given up.... Now I ask proof of the assertion, that Christ will instruct all sinners in a moment at death, in such a manner as to qualify them for immediate felicity."1. And third, "but probably you are ready to say that men are saved by the resurrection, and consequently by Christ. Be it so. This, however, is giving up both the other positions on which I have been remarking. For if men are saved by the resurrection, they are not saved by death's stopping their career of wickedness; not by being instructed,; and I may add, not by faith and repentance. That this is a position which you sometimes take, may be seen from the following quotations."2

"I have now examined the three positions on which you ground your doctrine of immediate happiness for all men; viz. 1. that men are saved by throwing off the body; 2. that they are saved by being instructed after death; and 3. that they are saved by the resurrection. But on either ground we have seen that faith and repentance, those indispensable prerequisites for heaven, are entirely excluded. Besides: these positions are at variance, one with the other. The moment you advance either of these positions, you renounce both the others....And yet you urge each of these positions, together, as though they were in perfect unison with each other!"

1. p. 47, 48

2. p. p. 50

But perhaps you will attempt to maintain a consistency by saying that you predicate your views, not on either of these positions separately, but on all united. This then, is confessing that neither of them separately is sufficient to support your system; so that all arguments resting upon either position alone, are not to be admitted as full proof of your views. This reduces your proof to a chain of three links, each of which must be sound, or the chain is broken....1

The third letter is an examination of Mr. Ballou's arguments. The first argument noticed is this "As sin and misery are inseparably connected, and as there will be no sin after death, so there can be no punishment."2 Hudson goes on to show that this "argument is founded upon the principle that all sin originates in the flesh, and that death saves the soul." and holds, justly, that he had already disproved that principle. He says also, second, "The argument before us is also founded upon the principle, that all criminality ceases as soon as the sinful act is performed; a principle repugnant to the scriptures, and the common sense of mankind." And anticipating the further argument which Ballou uses, we went on: "There is no need of actual transgression in a future world, to constitute men sinners in that state. If they die in a state of alienation from God, they are sinners after death, though they may commit no actual sins in that state."3

"Your next argument which I shall notice is drawn from the promise to Abraham. You say 'The promise made to Abraham is the substance of the gospel. But in this promise there appears to be no intimation of the doctrine of future punishment. If it be necessary for the Christian to believe in the doctrine of future punishment, why was it not equally necessary for the father of the faithful to embrace this indispensable article?' Your argument, briefly stated, would be this: There can be no punishment after death, because it is not threatened in the promise to Abraham....We might as well say, there is no future happiness, because it was not mentioned in the woe pronounced upon Judas. We do not expect to find the extent of a retribution clearly stated in those passages which treat exclusively upon some other subject."4

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1. pp. 53, 54

2. p. 55

3. p. 58, 59

4. pp. 60, 61

As Ballou had made much of the silence of the Old Testament on future punishment and its continuous threatening of immediate and present punishment on earth, these arguments, these texts and their interpretations are answered in the latter part of this third letter. Also the sixth chapter of Romans is taken up and correctly interpreted.

In the fourth letter Hudson passes to a Statement of the Doctrine of Future Punishment.

"I shall endeavor to show that those who die impenitent will, after death, enter into a state of misery, consisting of anxiety, guilt, and remorse, which will continue until repentance or reformation is effected. We do not believe that this misery will arise from any external application, but from the internal state of the mind....Sin always leaves the mind in condemnation."<sup>1</sup>

Again:

"Thus it appears both from scripture and reason, that men will retain their consciousness after death; that they will be the same individuals there that they were here, and will have a realizing sense of their conduct in this world. We will admit for the sake of the case, that men in a future state, though they may be conscious of having existed here, may not have a distinct recollection of all the actions they have performed. But this will not affect the argument. They will remember the last act of their lives here, especially if it be an act of gross wickedness, this is all the argument required."<sup>2</sup>

"We do not believe that men will be consigned to any particular place of punishment, as such; but that the punishment will arise from their own unholy feelings and disturbed minds. The remorse of conscience will be the punishment, and hell will be found within them. The future punishment in which we believe, is no different in nature of kind, from what men experience in this world."<sup>3</sup>

The arguments for future punishment which follow are briefly these:

"1. An equitable retribution does not take place in this world.

1. p. 91
2. pp. 93-94
3. pp. 94-95



2. It is an acknowledged principle with you, that religion is progressive in its nature, and operation. We have just been laboring to show that faith and repentance are of a gradual character, or that a period of time is requisite for their proper exercise. But we might have saved ourselves this labor; for it is a principle for which you strongly contend. 3. It is an acknowledged principle with us both, that all punishment is salutary. But, sir, we frequently see men subjected to punishment in consequence of their sins and this punishment continues to the day of their death, without producing any beneficial effect....We know that this punishment was not salutary, that it did not reform the sinners in this state; for they died in the perpetration of some sinful act."<sup>1</sup>

"From the consideration adduced in this Letter, it appears that punishment must be extended into a future state. We have shown that an individual consciousness is inseparable from a future state of existence, and that this consciousness must of necessity, make those unhappy after death, who leave this world in the very perpetration of crime. We have further seen that a full and equitable retribution does not take place in this world, and consequently must in a future; - that those who are taken away in the commission of crime cannot enter into immediate happiness, for repentance is necessary to salvation, and that is a progressive work, and is always attended with sensations of remorse; - and that punishment must in certain cases, be extended into a future state, otherwise we must give up the idea that punishment is salutary. Now these considerations, were there nothing else in the scriptures, would naturally lead our minds to the thought of a future retribution."<sup>2</sup>

Letter Five on A Future Judgment, begins with four premises:

"1. Though the scriptures teach a future state of existence, yet the passages applying to that subject, or even to a future state in any form, are much fewer in number than most people are apt to imagine. 2. A future judgment necessarily supposes a future punishment. 3. Not only every passage which speaks of a judgment in a future state, but every passage which designates any particular period of judgment in this state, is an argument in favor of a future retribution. Your system does not admit of any special judgment; that is, of any judgment which takes place at any specified time. According to your views, men are punished at one period as much as at another. There is no period of time, when they are punished by God beyond their deserts. Even at the destruction of Jerusalem, to which period you apply almost every threatening in the New Testament, men, you contend, received no more than they justly merited; and on your system, this is exactly what they have received in all ages of the world....Now any passage which treats of a day of judgment, though it should appear that the passage applies to the present world, is in reality a confutation of your system; as it supposes that the judgment does not take place at all times, at one period as much as at another. 4. In order to understand any writer, it is necessary to take into view the opinions of those to whom he addresses himself. This is a

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1. pp. 95, 117, 120

2. pp. 121, 122

principle of interpretation to which no reasonable man can object....What then was the opinion of those to whom the gospel was addressed? They believed in a future state of rewards and punishments....I do not mention this as affording direct evidence of a future judgment; but I do contend that it is necessary to consider this circumstance, in order to a right understanding of those passages which speak of a day of judgment."<sup>1</sup>

Following this, eight scripture passages are taken up and expounded in detail as proving a future judgment. The conclusion reached is this:

"It is not the sole object of this judgment, to dispense rewards and punishments. The grand object the Deity has in view in all his judgments, is to reform the transgressor, and qualify him for enjoyment. Thus far there is no dispute between us. But punishment, self considered, will never lead men to repentance. It is the influence of the divine spirit or a display of the divine character, which punishment sets home to the mind, that leads the sinner to repentance. Inflict a punishment upon any being, without giving him any knowledge of the being against whom he has sinned, or of the design of those laws he has violated, and it could be regarded in no other light than that of cruelty. Now one great object of a future general judgment undoubtedly is, to make a display of the characters of men, and the moral principles of the divine government. Men are not called to judgment for the purpose of giving the judge any new information relative to their characters; but to make the characters of men known to themselves, and to one another.

All will then see the rectitude of the divine administration. The saint will have a more glorious view of the divine character, and the sinner will see the justice of the misery he experiences. This will have a tendency to lead the sinner ultimately to repentance. Many of the dispensations of the Almighty look dark and mysterious to us, while in this world; but then the veil will be taken away, and the rectitude of the divine character will be obvious to all men."<sup>2</sup>

"As to the mode and manner of this judgment, God has not seen fit to inform us. I think, however, we may rationally conclude that the misery the sinner will be called to experience at that time, will not be inflicted by the immediate hand of God, or any other intelligent agent appointed by God; but that the misery will arise from the sinners' own feelings. If all his iniquity is brought to light, and even the motives of his heart are displayed before him, the obstinate sinner must be unhappy. There will be no need of any executive authority to inflict a punishment upon him; his guilt will be his own tormentor, and the hell will be enkindled within him."<sup>3</sup>

Letter Six contains what Hudson considered the best scripture proof of future retribution. Letter Seven contains further proof from history of

1. pp. 125-125
2. pp. 162, 163
3. p. 164

the soundness of the doctrine of future reward and future misery. In the eighth letter various minor assertions rather than arguments which were popularly used among Ballou's party are taken up and thoroughly disproven. The ninth letter refers to the moral influence of a doctrine of no future punishment as it was being set forth.

To this excellent and well-ordered, yet withal fair, work Mr. Ballou made no reply. Worse indeed, he refused to read the book, if we can trust the following words from a letter to the Rev. A. Kneeland just after this time.

"As to the license and its latitudes, which the writer, to whom you allude, has taken with my publications, I am unacquainted, having never read his works. Having been informed, by the best of judges, that it contained no new arguments on the merits of the subject to which it professes to be devoted, and having so often answered those which have been in use, I have not been disposed to go over grounds which I was sure would present neither fruits nor flowers, pleasant to the taste or eye."<sup>1</sup>

To the unbiased reader it is very plain that the arguments of future punishment group had not been properly and fairly answered, else this series of letters could never have been written with such strength and earnestness. However, Mr. Ballou's mind, as we see from the above letter, was closed on the subject.

Turning now to his writings during the period, we note first, in a volume of seven lectures published by Mr. Ballou in 1832, the following positive words concerning the doctrine of future rewards and punishments:

"In this doctrine there is a manifest want of that due connection between cause and effect, which is so wonderfully displayed in the natural order of things. While we are here in the body, if we feed on wholesome and nourishing food, the natural effects are strength and health of body; but if we, from whatever cause, feed on that which is unwholesome or poisonous

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, p. 321

the consequences are the reverse of the former, and sickness and weakness are sure to follow. But it would be evidently absurd to attempt to argue on principles, that these effects, either health or sickness, strength or weakness will be experienced in a state of immortality after this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Now it is plain from the scriptures, that all sin, all wickedness, and all evil doings are the works of the flesh; and there appears no more reason for supposing that the effects of these works are to extend into the immortal state, than for supposing that the effects of wholesome or unwholesome food are to extend to that state.

If one sow grain in a field in New England, it follows of natural consequence that the harvest will be gathered from the same field; but there appears no natural connection, as between cause and effect, between sowing grain in this country and gathering a harvest from it in Europe. St. Paul says "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." This seems perfectly natural because 'whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap'. But to argue that corruption may be gathered from an incorruptible state is to argue against the very nature of things.

The apostle to the Romans is explicit on this subject, where he says; 'There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit'.

By this it is evident that condemnation cannot exist any longer than men walk after the flesh. But none pretend that any of the human family will walk after the flesh in that incorruptible state of which the apostle speaks, where he says; 'This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.'

We can easily discern the natural connection between all the vices which are practiced by men, and the infelicities which these vices introduce into society, and the unhappiness they occasion, to those who practice them; but it is totally impossible to trace the connection between these vices and a state of permanent misery in an immortal state."<sup>1</sup>

In the same volume Lecture Nineteen is entitled Righteousness and Wickedness Repcompensed on Earth. The text is Prov. 9:31 - 'Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner'.

This is the positive side of Ballou's doctrine. He says:

"Our text gives evident support to the following particular subjects.  
1. There is righteousness in the earth. 2. There is wickedness in the earth.  
3. There is a sure recompense for righteousness. 4. There is a sure recompense for wickedness. 5. The recompense for righteousness is in the earth. 6.  
The recompense of wickedness is in the earth."<sup>2</sup>

1. Ballou's Works, Vol. IV, p. 334-336

2. p. 262

This lecture ends with the following words:

"To conclude, Let us, my friends, open our eyes on the certain consequences with which our heavenly Father rewards the obedient here in the earth. Let us regard that calm sunshine of peace within, which we are sure to enjoy as the reward of well doing. Let us endeavor to estimate in a proper manner the rich inheritance which is the certain lot of those who keep the commandments of God.

Let us look around us, and see if prisons, dungeons, and gallows are not a sufficient argument to prove, that the wicked are recompensed in the earth. And if this sad scene be not sufficient, go draw the veil from still greater horrors, where intemperance and uncleanness exhibit the warning spectacle of degraded humanity. Beloved youth, look, these terrors are no fictions; they are awful realities! Your feet stand in slippery places! O, put on the whole armor of righteousness that ye may be able to stand in the evil day; and pray most fervently that you may not be led into temptation, but that you may be delivered from evil."<sup>1</sup>

In 1834 Ballou published a book entitled "An Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution on the Principle of Morals, Analogy and the Scriptures". This consists of an essay on future retribution, setting forth Ballou's own views, followed by some of his own articles and correspondence which had appeared from time to time in The Universalist Magazine.

In this opening essay, Ballou first sets out to undermine the theory of the moral value of future punishment.

"The candid reader will now see, that the doctrine we are examining is unsound; for it depends on the supposition, that as we act from hope and fear; the good hoped for and the evil dreaded, must both be in a future state...

There is no necessity of promising a reward in a future state for the practice of duty in the present. All that is wanting for this purpose is to understand and to be persuaded that righteousness brings ample reward in the present life.

This conclusion is abundantly justified by the fact, that in room of obtaining the good which the wicked promise themselves in the paths of vice, they always meet with that degree of trouble and infelicity which constitutes a just recompense for their disobedience to the commands of God, and the dictates of conscience.

In our investigation of the force of motive to induce the wicked to  
1. p. 275



push forward in wrongdoing, we must not neglect to notice the counteracting power which is overcome by it (according to common opinion). It is a fact, with which we are all acquainted, that nearly all the vicious have been educated in the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments; yet notwithstanding the apprehension which they have entertained, that by the practice of the vices in which they indulged their passions, they were exposing themselves to inconceivable miseries hereafter; the expectation of enjoyment in the present state, has carried them on in the strong current of sin, which has broken down every barrier, and furnished conclusive proof that no motive is so sure of inducing action, as the expectation of immediate happiness.

In view of these facts, who will wonder that in these times there should be some engaged in laboring to convince men that present happiness can be obtained by being faithful in the discharge of our duty to God, to our fellow-creatures, and to ourselves, by doing justly, loving mercy, and by walking humbly, and by no other means; and that however flattering sin may appear, and however strongly our blind, fleshly passions may tempt us from duty, moral death, condemnation, and misery will be the immediate and sure recompense for unlawful indulgence?" 1

There follow many pages continuing this argument, setting it forth in all ways favorable to Ballou's own ideas, arguing the certainty in every case of punishment on earth in order to disprove all necessity for punishment in the future.

His style of argument is easily discerned in the following refutation:

"Those who rely on what they call analogy to support the doctrine of future retribution, hold that in all respects, which are necessary to carry sin and its miseries into the future state, that state will be analogous to this mode of being. So that, reasoning from analogy, as moral agents sin, and thereby render themselves miserable in this world, the same moral agents may continue to do the same in the world to come. In connection with this argument it is urged, that as it is evident to our senses that sin often escapes a just retribution in this world, it must be recompensed in another state, or divine justice must forever be deprived of its claims.

On reasonings of such a character we shall use the freedom to say that they appear to have no higher authority than mere human speculations injudiciously managed. That they are nothing more than simple speculations, is evident from the fact that they are not founded on any divine authority. We presume that their own advocates never ventured to support them by scripture authority. And that they are managed injudiciously is very apparent from the circumstance that while they profess to be justified by the principle of analogy, they are a direct denial of the very analogy on which they depend. Theologians who endeavor to exert an influence over the minds of people, by



means of these speculations, are constantly urging that in this world we see sin procuring for its agents the riches and honors of the world, while it escapes judicial detection, and goes unpunished. Now if they were consistent with their analogy and with themselves, they would see at once, that in the next state of existence sin will procure for its agents the riches and honors of that world, and there as well as here, escaped judicial detection and go unpunished. They would likewise see that as divine justice can quiet its own claims in this world without administering a full and adequate retribution of human conduct, it may do the same in the future state. In this way we might proceed and make the future state precisely like the present; for we have no more authority for carrying sin and its miseries into a future world, than we have for carrying all other things into that state, which we find in this. Reasoning from all that we know we must believe that so long as men sin they will do so from the beguiling power of temptation. If then we believe that sin will exist in the future state, we must suppose that temptations will there act on the mind with a deceiving influence....

If we allow the doctrine of future retribution to stand on the principle of analogy, we must also conclude, that as those who are called good men, and pious saints in this world, often forsake the right way, turn from the holy commandments, and fall into diverse sins and temptations, and become wretched in wickedness, - so, in the future world, the saints may depart from the path of divine rectitude, andabase themselves in the moral defilement of all manner of iniquity."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the harangue runs along for several pages, winding up with this extreme statement.

"Then, according to analogy, as soon as we find ourselves in the future world, it will then be necessary to inform those who shall be wicked there, that they are in danger of punishment in a future state. It will then be licentious to believe and teach that all punishment for sin is in that state where it will be committed. According to this analogy, sin will never be fully punished in the state in which it is committed, but the transgressor must always look into a future state for retribution. Also, as the righteous are not fully rewarded for their good works in this world, and as they are obliged to look forward for a full recompense hereafter, without which prospect they would have no inducement to lead godly lives, so, according to analogy, when they arrive to a future reward, they will have no inducements to do well in that state, unless they can enjoy the prospect of being recompensed in a state beyond that."<sup>2</sup>

It is very evident that this is no refutation of the teaching that the consequences of sin extend beyond this life, but rather it appears to be a deliberate caricature of their doctrine of analogy, as they called it.

1. pp. 38-39

2. p. 44

The remainder of the essay is taken up with scripture proofs that sin is punished in the present world. Beginning with Adam who was punished at once, following with Cain, following again with the wicked men in the age of Noah, the punishment is shown to be of the earth and on the earth. The city of Sodom and its punishment, and the Egyptians, when they would not let God's people go, were punished immediately on the earth. The Mosaic law promised punishment in this life. Thus are references carried down through Old Testament history.

Coming to the preaching of Jesus, we find that Ballou is able to insist that every threat referred to that day and generation there on earth and largely to the fall of Jerusalem. Jesus never threatened the wicked with hell fire, but simply preached inevitable and proportionate retribution in this world.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is extensively noted and finally we get this conclusion.

"And there seems no reason to doubt that it (the parable) was designed to represent the error the Jews would fall into by adhering to the ritual dispensation, after it was fulfilled in Christ; the miserable condition which had been the lot of that people ever since the reception of the Gentiles into the gospel covenant, and faith of Abraham, signified by Abraham's bosom."<sup>1</sup>

The last scripture passage to be dealt with, which closes the essay, is this -

"And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: 'fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.'" (Lk. 12:4,5).

After a long explanation we get the paraphrase, most confidently

presented:

l. p. 101

"And we feel a good degree of confidence that the mind of the candid reader will feel the force of what has been offered, and see the propriety of paraphrasing our text as follows: 'And I say unto you, my friends, be not so much afraid of them who have power only to scourge you in their synagogues, and to administer cruel tortures to your bodies, but have no authority to take your lives, as of that more extensive authority to which your brethren the Jews will deliver you, by bringing you before governors and kings; for this power can, after inflicting cruelties on your bodies doom your lives and bodies to be destroyed in Gehenna.'"<sup>1</sup>

"It now remains only to give the true meaning of the word Gehenna, which in our text is rendered hell, though this has already been done in the preceding pages....The word rendered hell, in our text, means nothing but that place of execution, where malefactors were cast alive, and consumed in fire."<sup>2</sup>

Remembering that it is now seventeen years since Ballou first got into controversy with the Rev. Edward Turner on the subject of future punishment, and during it made up his mind, we are surprised that after all this time of discussion and controversy he should have nothing more of positive value to offer us than has been fully and sufficiently outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. This is his complete and his final statement in a controversial way on the whole subject.

In the controversial letters and articles which composed the remainder of the work but which are not dated, we glean the following paragraphs:

"We are not certified, in direct terms, that 'adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; will not be renewed in the world of spirits; but would you be willing to allow, that as the inspired writings nowhere say that these will not exist in the world of spirits, they they therefore will exist and be practiced there? Will you reply, and say, - all these, the apostle calls the fruits of the flesh; but as the flesh will not exist in the world of spirits, so, of course, these fruits cannot be produced where the tree, which bears them, cannot grow? But if you say this you will perceive the reasonableness of the inquiry which demands the necessity of renewing chastisements and sufferings in a state where crimes can never be committed.

I am utterly unable, sir, to see the least propriety in supposing that there will be punishments for sin in a state where sin will never exist.

1. pp. 102, 113

2. pp. 113, 114

And to me it is altogether unaccountable, why the advocates for future punishment should always direct their observations to the particular subject of punishment, and never attempt to prove that men will sin in that state, by which this punishment will be rendered necessary.

The second and last step, by which you advance to your conclusion, that punishment will be renewed in the world of spirits, is the following: 'To all appearance, chastisements do not always, in the present state, complete their benevolent design.' 'To all appearance!' Why, sir, did you ever see the appearance of a spirit, after all the sufferings of this mortal state were closed? Pain brings man into the world, and pain carries him out; and as to any appearance which indicates his not suffering evil enough, it is doubted if anyone has ever been able to discover it. Our blessed Saviour has informed us, that, 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof'.

St. Paul says, Romans 6:7, 'For he that is dead is freed from sin'. With this scripture declaration before us, can we say that men will be sinners in a future state? If not, what use will chastisement serve?"1

A different answer is given to practically the same objection in reply to reason.

"You think that the 'continuance of unsubdued passions and uncorrected vices to the close of life' are appearances which prove that chastisements do not complete their benevolent designs in this life. But, sir, what does reason say on this subject? To me it replies; 'Before I can judge of this question, I must be informed what these chastisements were designed for. If they were partly designed as a warning to others to avoid those practices which were visited with such miseries, so far their purpose may be effected without their being renewed hereafter. If the administered punishment was designed to put a stop to the practice of vice, it evidently accomplishes this design by the death of the subject. Now, to all appearances, these ends are fully answered. But if these chastisements were administered for the purpose of preparing the subject for the enjoyment of any privileges in another state of existence, then, in order to be satisfied, from appearances, that they had not accomplished their design, it is necessary to examine the subject in that state.'"2

Respecting the opposition to Ballou's doctrine, he says:

"Let us ask then, what this spirit is opposed to? Answer: It is opposed to having sin and with this imperfect state. It is opposed to having every son and daughter of Adam born into the kingdom of divine light and immortal love immediately after this mortal state ends. It is opposed to the discontinuance of misery after this state of sorrow and affliction is no more. This spirit, then, must feel inclined to favor also the continuance of sin hereafter; to favor also the continuance of moral darkness and the protraction of misery beyond the resurrection."3

1. pp. 122, 123

2. pp. 125, 126

3. p. 139

In the short essay on An Important Subject Considered, a new aspect of Ballou's doctrine is set forth.

"Let us, at this time, confine our investigations to the following question: If one who goes out of this world ignorant of Jesus Christ, and inexperienced in that reconciliation to God, which a knowledge of the gospel effects in the soul, commences his sentient existence in the future state, in an immortal constitution, in which no temptation to sin will even try his soul; but where the true light of divine wisdom will direct every thought, and fix the affections entirely on the beauties and glory of infinite goodness, by which sweetest and most tranquil felicity will be enjoyed,- how then is Jesus Christ the saviour of this subject?....

Answer: Just as he would be if this subject should pass through another imperfect state. For then, even after ages of ages of misery and sin, if such were his lot, that miserable state like our present mortal state, must pass away, and our subject would, after all, entirely depend on Jesus Christ for a resurrection into a state of immortality and eternal life. Yes; Jesus must, after all, be our resurrection and our life; he must be to us all, the wisdom and the power of God; he must be to us the truth, and the bright mirror in which we may behold the glory of the invisible God.

In I Cor. 15:22 St. Paul says: 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' In this most important sense, Jesus Christ is the eternal life of the world. In this all-important sense, Jesus Christ is the same to the millions of the human race, who have lived and died in heathen lands and countries, as he is to those, who, in this world, have enjoyed the light of divine revelation, and the obedience of faith. In this sense also, he is the same to the millions of infants, who have had their birth in Christian communities, but have been called from this mortal existence, before they were capable of being initiated into the mysteries of the gospel....

But if our ideas of the future state of man be conformable to the testimony of St. Paul in I Corinthians 15 in which we are certified, that the state in which all men will be made alive in the resurrection, is Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, it seems unreasonable to believe that faith and repentance will be necessary in that state.....All Christian people believe, that for our enjoyment of divine things, in this state of existence, it is necessary that we believe in this divine system of eternal life, which is manifested through the resurrection of Jesus; and that this faith should be productive of emendation of life; but that this faith or any of its consequences will be necessary in a state of immortality, perhaps we have no more authority for believing, than we have for believing that such faith is necessary for Christ himself, in that immortal state."

At some time during those seventeen years a conversation with a

Unitarian preacher produced the following:

1. pp. 152-158



"It is now but a few days since I enjoyed a very pleasant opportunity, in conversation with an Unitarian preacher. We found that on most of subjects, embracing doctrines, we were perfectly agreed; and I thought he manifested as little relish for orthodoxy as myself. But there was one question with which he seemed to dispose to favor the doctrine of a future retribution, though he was, by no means inclined to contend that punishment will be endless. The sum of his question was this: if a man of power and wealth oppress the honest and industrious, and swell his own coffers by such oppressions; if he, being artful, in order to cover his iniquities, goes so far in them as to persecute and put the just to death, all the time so deceiving the public as to secure to himself the respect and even homage of society at large, and lives in this deceit and wickedness until old age, and dies suddenly at last without repentance, how can it be made to appear that such a sinner is rewarded according to his works, unless he receive a punishment for his sins in a future state?....My reply then proceeded on the following scriptures as its foundation, Eccl. 4:42; Prov. 3:17; Prov. 13:15; Isa. 57:21.

The first of the above passages seemed to meet his question as directly as if it had been written for that express purpose; and, taken in connection with the others, seemed to lay open the whole subject. 'All who are oppressed under the sun enjoy as much peace and pleasantness as are the natural consequences of all the righteousness which they practice in walking in the ways of wisdom, which leaves all their sufferings, which are caused by the injustice of their oppressors, no other character, in reference to themselves, than those physical evils possessed, which are acknowledged to be inflicted by the hand of Divine Providence. As moral beings, then, our enjoyments, at all times, corresponds with the degree of moral righteousness to which we attain. This being established, it must follow, of course, that the testimony which supports it has equal force to maintain, on the other hand, that the transgressor at all times as a moral being suffers in a due proportion to the degree of wickedness by which he is characterized. The man, therefore, who was made the subject of the Unitarian's question, did, in fact, endure a suffering, during his whole lifetime, which corresponded with the wickedness which he had practiced. As to what this man appeared to enjoy, there certainly could not be any more of moral enjoyment than there was of conscious integrity in the means which procured his enjoyment; and surely no Christian ought to allow that sensuality is real happiness.

Unitarians, whether they know it or not, according to what they preach, maintain that there will be no other distinctions in the conditions of men in the future state, than such an infinity of variations as shall correspond with the infinite variety of moral character, formed in this mortal life. None, who have sinned, will ever be so happy as they would have been if they had never sinned; and none will be so miserable as they would have been if they had been more sinful in this world. This doctrine certainly allows that everlasting condemnation will be endured, and everlasting happiness enjoyed by the same individual. For if David, king of Israel, will be forever justified for the good deeds which he did, and in that justification will enjoy everlasting felicity; on the other hand, as he was, in some of his acts, extremely wicked, so for them he will be forever condemned, and, in that condemnation



will endure everlasting sorrow.....St. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, was a most infuriate persecutor of Jesus and his disciples, for which he must suffer everlasting condemnation; but after his conversion he was a faithful disciple and minister of his divine Master, and for this he will enjoy everlasting justification. And, taking St. Paul for an example, so it will be for all mankind.

I shall not undertake to state all the objections to this doctrine, which might be brought; but a few may be mentioned. First, this doctrine supposes that what is denominated sin, is an evil, which must be attended with evil consequences eternally....This should not be allowed, as it must involve the original cause of this evil in moral blame....Second, this doctrine is not worthy of our belief as Christians, for this very good reason, the founder of Christianity never taught it....Third, this doctrine is a denial of the New Testament doctrine of entire sanctification....Fourthly, there is hardly any view of this doctrine, which discovers its impropriety more evidently, than to contemplate it as awarding everlasting happiness for our virtues in this world, but no reward for any good we may be employed about hereafter; and on the other hand, as awarding endless punishment for our sins in this world, but providing no punishment for wrongs which the wicked will practice in the future state."<sup>1</sup>

And, again:

"But I must hasten to notice your queries. First, in relation to what you term 'death and glory',

This subject has never been much agitated among brethren of our order, until quitelately. Dr. Priestley's views of an unconscious state after death, were not known to me when I wrote my Treatise on Atonement, nor had that subject then ever been considered by me. This accounts for my silence on it. Of late I have endeavored to know what divine revelation has communicated on this subject; but, owing to my want of discernment, I have not been able to reconcile all the passages, which seem to relate to the case, to a fair support of either side of the question. My efforts, I acknowledge, have not been made with that intenseness of application, respecting this matter, as they would have been, had I been persuaded that the question was of any great consequence. Being fully satisfied that the Scriptures teach us to believe no moral state, between the death of the body, and the resurrection state, in which that which was sown in dishonor will be raised in glory, and that which was sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption, it seemed to me immaterial whether we enter, immediately, after the dissolution of the body, on the resurrection state, or sleep in unconscious quietude any given time before that glorious event shall take place. In either case it is what you call 'death and glory', for it makes no difference as to the length of time during an unconscious state. In such a state there can be effected no moral preparations."<sup>2</sup>

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We may summarize and compare the views of Hudson and of Ballou as

1. pp. 168-160

2. pp. 182, 183

follows. Ballou held that punishment is remedial, corrective, in its purpose. So also did Hudson. Ballou also held that punishment is consequential in its nature, rather than arbitrarily decided upon and applied. Again Hudson is in full accord. Ballou held that there is consequential punishment in this life, bound up in the nature of things, and that it acts for our good. Hudson is agreed.

But here the likeness ends. Ballou believes that there is no future punishment. Why does he believe thus? He says first one thing and then another, using scriptural exegesis, argument, or ridicule, as best serves his purpose at the moment. At bottom, however, his staple reasons are these; - 1. Sin is of the flesh, and ends with the flesh and its temptations. 2. There is to be no sin in the resurrection state, hence no suffering. 3. The resurrection state is entirely different from this, not in any sense a continuation of this. Other arguments are used from time to time, but are merely refuges when driven from these positions, to which he ever returns.

The fact is, that Ballou, when once his mind was made up on the matter of future punishment, was henceforth not open to new light on the matter, and held the doctrine of no future punishment deliberately from then on, not because of the soundness of any one or all of the grounds he worked out for it, but because the doctrine pleased and suited him. Three reasons suggest themselves strongly as the real ones for the development and support of this doctrine by Ballou.

1. He was influenced in early life by Caleb Rich and his theory, and this influence was not counteracted by any knowledge of the teachings of Murray or of Winchester while his mind was yet plastic.

2. He had in the popular Calvinistic teaching of the glory due

the elect at their death, a pattern which seemed to him so satisfying, so definite, so delightful to contemplate, so worthy of a loving God, that he could not resist the temptation to apply it to all men, setting it forth as the method by which all are to be saved, and that all are indeed to be saved, was already long since settled in his mind.

He fought endless hell continuously, till he literally hated the whole idea of "future misery", and delighted in pouring contempt upon it. Thus battering down the ramparts of hell, it was quite natural that he should undertake to sweep all miseries entirely away, and have the honor of being the first to discover that there is no hell at all! Even though he did preach present punishment, his fundamental attitude was really negative. Till he died, he was fighting the fire and brimstone of the orthodox hell. In his Examination of the Doctrine of Future Retribution, he remarks in the preface, p. 8:

"The object of the writer of the following pages is to place his views, respecting the doctrine of a future state of retribution, before the public, and to preserve his arguments on that subject, that when the time shall come, as he believes it will, when people in general will number the tenet of future punishment among those corruptions of Christianity, which will then be abandoned, it may be known that the writer disbelieved it in his day; and also that the arguments with which he opposed it may then be known."

Hudson held that there is punishment hereafter, on the grounds, as he states them, that the corrective work of punishment is not complete in this life, in some men, and that the consequences are not always experienced in this life. Hence, since punishment is remedial in purpose, and consequential in nature, it must necessarily, in the case of the rebellious, be continued over into the next life. This sounds like splendid moral insight, as compared with the fallacies of Ballou's arguments. But we should remember that while this view is indeed worthy of much appreciation for its general

soundness, it retains much more of the old theological framework than Ballou's. Hudson believed that the righteous were forgiven their sins, and had a reward awaiting them, that the unrepentant and wicked had punishment awaiting them, their goodness being ignored. He believed in a future judgment of all souls. In and with all this old scheme of two great classes, and of general judgment, he managed to hold that punishment was not physical, nor anything inflicted, but remorse, regret, realization, of the awakened soul. Even the judgment is thus interpreted, and made a time when men are made to see themselves as they are, as God already sees them. Hudson, in short, was able to reach the desired end, universal salvation, without discarding the main outlines of eschatology, and within these outlines he had been able to rework what had been arbitrary and endless punishment into consequential, corrective, and finally efficacious punishment.

Both Ballou and Hudson bring forth out of their treasure things old and new. Hudson has more of the old, proportionately, in his scheme, and more of the truth!

While this controversy was going on the exegetical aspect of the subject came again into ascendancy. Exegetical controversy had begun many years before in the work of Dr. Chauncy, minister of the First Church, Boston, (Congregational minister) who in 1784 issued his 'Salvation of all Men'. In that work he discusses the meaning of the word aión and aiónios and says:

"The precise duration intended by the words.....must be determined by the nature of the thing spoken of, or other passages of scripture that explain it. When it is affirmed of the wicked that they shall go away into everlasting punishment, the certain meaning of this word everlasting, is clearly and fully settled by the above proof of the final salvation of all men."<sup>1</sup>

1. Taken from p. 270 of his works, by Foster in A History of New England Theology, p. 207

Edward replied in 1789 insisting that the words aion and aionios are entirely in agreement with our English words eternity and eternal. This seems to have ended the exegetical discussion for some time.

It was started up again by the publication of "Inquiry into the Scriptural Import of the Words Sheol, Hades, Tartarus and Gehenna; all translated hell in the common English Version" by Walter Balfour (second edition printed at Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1825). The purpose as stated by the author is as follows: "The simple object of the author in this Inquiry, is, to examine the foundation on which the doctrine of endless misery is built. This doctrine rests on the fact or the falsehood that a place called hell, in a future state, is prepared for the punishment of the wicked....Most Universalists have conceded this to their opponents, and have contended not against the existence of such a place of misery, but against the endless duration of its punishment. All the principal writers on both sides of this question proceed on this ground, that there is a place of future punishment, and that the name of it is hell."<sup>1</sup>

The findings of Balfour are as follows:

"We have shown, that neither Sheol, Hades, or Tartarus, is ever used by the sacred writers to signify a place of endless misery for the wicked. This was all we were bound to do, in opposing the common opinion on the subject. But we have also shown, that this opinion originated with the heathen; and that the Jews learned it from them."<sup>2</sup>

After a much longer examination, our author comes to the conclusion that Gehenna in the New Testament has no reference to a place of endless punishment. Consequently Balfour proved to his satisfaction that there is no such place as hell at all. This of course greatly delighted Universalists, who were more than eager to have this further backing for their faith.

In 1826 Balfour, greatly delighted, no doubt, at his first success, came forth with a second inquiry, entitled "An Inquiry into the Scriptural Doctrine concerning the Devil and Satan, and into the Extent and Duration expressed by the Terms Olia, Aion, and Aionios, rendered Everlasting, Forever,

1. Introduction of the Work, p. v
2. p. 91

etc. in the Common Version, and especially when applied to Punishment." In this work Balfour joyfully discovers and sets forth to his eager readers the information that there is no devil; also that the words *aion*, *aionios* do not mean eternal or endless in the sense in which they have been understood. He arrived at the desired result that the scriptures do not teach any punishment beyond this life.

Balfour's opinions were made more definite, probably, by these studies and reached their final point in his work entitled: Three Essays which was published in 1820. "Here he promulgated the doctrine that the souls of men are not immortal; that the spirit returns unto God who gave it, in the sense that it is laid up with Christ in God, unconscious, to be restored to man in the resurrection at the last day, at which time all men shall be immediately admitted without judgment into felicity, from which they shall never depart."<sup>1</sup>

In Hudson's Series of Letters to Reverend Hosea Ballou, which we have reviewed, a short passage is given to some comments on Balfour's two books, the first and the second. But it remained for Professor Stewart of Andover to bring in a reply. Stewart set forth the orthodox views with what appears to have been profound scholarship. Balfour, however, was not to be silenced and followed this reply with one of his own, entitled "Reply to Professor Stewart's Exegetical Essay on Several Words relating to Future Punishment.". This was published in 1831. This reply, however, added almost nothing to the discussion.

Balfour had become a no future punishment advocate, his works were used as ammunition on that side of the controversy. Hosea Ballou II, who

1. Foster: Ibid. p. 330



was also on that side, had an article on "The Jewish Usage of the Word Gehenna", in The Universalist Expositor for May, 1832, in which he begins:

The appearance of Rev. Mr. Balfour's Inquiry into the import of the words Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, etc. produced at the first a strong sensation, which has not yet subsided, in the public's mind. It was felt by all, that the main pillars of the common doctrine of hell had been shaken, and by many, that they had been removed. Different classes of the religious community were, of course, differently affected on the occasion. The dissenters and converts from the popular system were gratified; its staunch adherents were alarmed. A reply soon appeared, with considerable pomp of preparation, from a Boston clergyman; but it fell dead from the press, and was heard no more of, except through the counter report of an answer. After an interval, another, from the President of Bowdoin College, followed, and shared the fate of its predecessor. A third, from one of the Professors at Andover, has since taken its way to Sheol. Without arrogating a right to pronounce summarily on the merits of the entire controversy, we may venture to say at least so much as this; that no respectable answer can be made to Mr. Balfour's work, which will subserve the doctrine of hell's torments as held by the common people. Should an opponent even succeed in the final argument, still the acknowledged facts which he must concede at the outset, would break up the popular foundation of the doctrine; and his only expedient then would be, to shift the long settled faith of the people over to new grounds to which they have not been accustomed.\*1

Thus the exegetical controversy at this time greatly strengthened the foundations of Universalist doctrine, as already held. It also lent most of its strength to the no future punishment group.

#### Section E. Secession and Reunion.

This controversy produced a split in the Universalist denomination, which now claims our attention.

We have seen how the feeling between the two groups on the question of future punishment was burning steadily higher as the war of ideas continued. But the occasion for the secession comes from another angle. There was a group of Universalist ministers in Rhode Island and in some adjacent localities in Massachusetts and Connecticut, who were accustomed to hold regular conferences. These ministers were largely Restorationists. In 1827 at their conference they decided to try to form an association of Universalists of that

section, to be called the Providence Association. By 1828 they had a constitution temporarily adopted and in 1829 they were organized and their president resigned from the general convention of the Universalist church and all the associations under its jurisdiction, giving as the reason "that he was not satisfied with its rules and regulations." Then the Southern Association of Universalists (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut) which contained largely no future punishment people, met in 1830, they passed a resolution vigorously denouncing the independent Providence Association, the Southern Association being under the jurisdiction of the General Convention. Of course this Southern Association in passing a resolution upholding the honor of the parent body went far beyond its authority. The next meeting of the parent body, the General Convention, passed a resolution "that it is inconsistent with ecclesiastical order for a person to be at the same time an acting member of two ecclesiastical bodies claiming equal power, etc." This made the Restorationists of the Providence Association feel that they were being thrown out of the General Convention for having a separate association. They claimed that having a separate association made no difference in their loyalty to and observance of all the regulations of the General Convention. The last step, which precipitated their withdrawal, was this, that committees were appointed to inquire into the relations of the Maine and New York State Conventions to the General Convention, and yet none was appointed to investigate the Providence Association. The next year these Committees reported that the Maine and New York Conventions intended and desired to remain separate. The members of this Providence Association by this time had come to feel, whether justified or not, we cannot say, that they must choose between their Association and the General Convention. Therefore at the next meeting

of the Association they formed at its close "A Convention of Restorationist Ministers and Delegates." They passed the following resolution:

"Forasmuch as there has been of late years a great departure from the sentiments of the first Universalist Preachers in this country by a majority of the General Convention - the leaders of which do now arrogate to themselves, exclusively, the name of Universalists, and Whereas we believe, with Murray, Winchester, Chauncy, and all the ancient Authors who have written upon this subject, that Regeneration - a General Judgment; Future Rewards and Punishments, to be followed by the Final Restoration of all mankind to holiness and happiness, are fundamental Articles of Christian Faith, and that the Modern sentiments of No Future accountability, connected with Materialism, are unfriendly, to pure religion and subversive of the best interests of society; and Whereas, our adherence to the doctrines on which the General Convention was first established, instead of producing fair, manly controversy, has procured for us contumely - exclusion from Ecclesiastical Councils, and final expulsion, and this without proof of any offense on our part against the Rules of the order or the laws of Christ; It was therefore

Resolved, that we hereby form ourselves into a religious Community for the Defence and Promulgation of the doctrines of Revelation in their original purity, and the promotion of our own improvement - to be known by the name of the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists.

Resolved, that the annual meetings of this body be holden in Boston, on the first Wednesday and following Thursday, in January." 1

This restoration group fortunately had a magazine, already established, and in active warfare. The Rev. Edin Ballou had begun the issue of the Independent Messenger on the first of January, 1831, although the

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, pp. 330-331

secession did not take place until August of the same year. In the first issue he gave his reasons for having left the denomination and having become an independent restorationist. He explicitly stated that his magazine was for the defence of Restorationists. This brought forth a reply from "The Trumpet and Universalist Magazine" which was the organ of the Universalist Church. Rev. Adin Ballou said many years later in an article, "Henceforth there was hot work for a few years. On my part, I made it my business not to let a single hostile charge, imputation or innuendo, whether personal, doctrinal, or polemical, go unrefuted, during this period of active warfare."

At its first annual meeting this restoration organization adopted a Confession of Faith which was identical with the Winchester Confession of 1803, by which the whole Universalist body was standing, with the exception of the third article, which was made to read: "We believe in a tribulation beyond death and in the necessity of faith and repentance, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto them." 1

This secession was almost entirely confined to Massachusetts and Rhode Island churches. It did not by any means hold in in its restorationist fellowship all the Universalists who were restorationists in views. Indeed, the Universalists who retained the name Universalists were able, with apparent truth, to insist even in 1831, at the beginning of the secession, that the General Convention "now counts among its members, as it ever has done, more Restorationists than belong to that party that seems to identify all its movements with that appellation."

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Although Thomas Whittemore was probably well known in 1829 as a

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, p. 333

follower of Ballou and not a Restorationist, it still seems that his information gathered at that date may be correct, and justifies us in assuming that although there were more Restorationists who did not secede than there were that did, that the majority sentiment of the Universalist body was for no future punishment, following Ballou. Whittemore, writing his Modern History of Universalism which was published in 1830, sent out a questionnaire, probably in 1829, of which he tells as follows:

"In order to obtain the most satisfactory evidence concerning the number and views of the Universalists in the United States, I addressed a Circular to the principal Universalist clergy, requesting their answers to several questions, the last of which follows: 'What proportion of the Universalists with whom you are acquainted, believe in the doctrine of punishment in the future state of existence? and what part of them are Trinitarians?' Knowing the use I was about to make of their communications, they returned the following answer on these points.

From Rev. William A. Drew of Augusta, Maine. 'As far as my knowledge extends, I should think that a majority of our brethren would not affirm positively, as their settled belief, that there will or will not be punishment hereafter. The other half may be pretty equally divided on the subject,. But of this I cannot speak with certainty. Of the ministers, five are open disbelievers of any future punishment; eight profess to believe it, but most of them do not seem to be strenuous about it; and the remainder are studiously silent on the question. It may be that this proportion quite nearly answers also to the laity on this subject.'

From Rev. George Bades, of Livermore, Maine. He speaks of that part of the state which lies west of the Kennebec. 'I find it somewhat difficult to answer your sixth question. I cannot judge of a man's peculiar sentiments, any further than they are declared, and as I have in all my public labors studiously avoided any direct statements on this point, in consequence of not being myself decided either way, the subject has not been sufficiently discussed to enable me with accuracy to pass judgment. I should, however, give it as my opinion, that believers in punishment in a future state of existence, are in the minority in this part of the State. With regard to the doctrine of the Trinity, I believe there are very few who embrace it.'

From Rev. Joseph P. Atkinson, of Meredith, N. H. 'With the Universalists in the county of Strafford, I am considerably acquainted, and should give it as my opinion, that a large majority confine sin and misery to this transitory state. The societies with which I am particularly acquainted, are those in Meredith, Guilford and Gilmanton, and of these I know of none who extend punishment beyond the grave.'

From Rev. William S. Balch, Winchester, N. H. 'I cannot answer your sixth question. I know nothing about their opinions concerning in intermediate state.'

From Rev. McManzies Rayner, Hartford, Conn. 'I believe there are few of what are called Restorationists in this state.'

From Rev. S. R. Smith, Clinton, Oneida County, N. Y. 'It is impossible to ascertain, with much certainty, the number of those who believe in a state of disciplinary punishment after death. There is, however, no doubt that they are a minority of the order of Universalists in this State. My personal acquaintance extends to two-thirds of the societies at least; and though there are believers in future punishment in all of them, yet, in general, they appear not to be as numerous as those who reject that doctrine. The same is unquestionably true of the preachers. But this is a subject on which very little interest is felt, and is seldom agitated by the preacher.'

From Rev. Pitt Morse, Watertown, Jefferson County, N. Y. 'The majority of Universalists, with whom I am acquainted, do not believe in punishment beyond this mortal state. But there are some who believe in a limited punishment in a future state of being.'

From Rev. Aaron B. Grosh, Marietta, Lancaster County, Pa. 'Persons who call themselves Universalists, believe, I compute, from one-fiftieth to one-twentieth part in punishment after death; but if we include others (i.e. the Universalists among other denominations) then those who believe in a state of punishment after death, are more than one-half of the whole number. For I find many Restorationists among the German Baptists, the Lutherans, and the Reformed Churches; the old Mennonists are nearly all such; and there are a few among the English people, particularly among those who are attached to no society.'

From Mr. Alexander MacRae, Editor of the Liberalist, a Universalist journal in Wilmington, N. C. 'Universalists in this state, with but few exceptions, believe in no punishment after death.'

From Rev. Josiah C. Waldo, Cincinnati, Ohio. 'Mr. R. is thoroughly acquainted with the Universalists in every section of this country. He tells me all, with a few exceptions, are Unitarian Universalists. It is the fact in this city. The Restorationists, he says, are comparatively nothing. The number in this city you know, as well as I, is small.'

From Rev. J. Kidwell, a travelling preacher in Ohio and Indiana. 'There is but one preacher within my acquaintance, calling himself a Universalist, who believes in future punishment, and there are but few private individuals. This preacher is the Rev. Daniel Parker.'

The believers in future punishment, then, in the Universalist denomination about 1830, seem to be decidedly in the minority, but not ready  
1. Whittier, Modern History of Universalism, pp. 439-441, in footnote



to secede except in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, where the discussion had been much hotter, centering around Boston.

Rev. Adin Ballou in The Universalist, February 25, 1871, tells of the reasons for the suspension of the Restorationist association.

It will now be asked how this Secession Association came to its death? and why? I will give the facts and reasons.

1. The Unitarian denomination, which previously to our secession had kept itself almost silent (not entirely so) concerning the final destiny of mankind, began at an early moment to sympathise with, encourage, befriend, and fellowship us. Never did a little body of people more need such treatment, and never was one more grateful. Many of the Unitarian clergy, hitherto cautiously silent, avowed themselves Restorationist in sentiment. We were allowed perfect freedom to preach and publish our Restorationism. We were welcomed to Unitarian pulpits and parishes. We became to a considerable extent fused into their denomination. Can anybody guess what effect all this was likely to have on our judgment as to the propriety of maintaining a separate denomination?

2. The battle was over with the Universalist denomination. It was virtually over in 1835, by the cessation of all offensive language towards Restorationists as such. It was found not to pay. The very last demonstration of contempt, that I can now recollect, was made in the Spring of 1834, by the editors of the New Haven Examiner, and, I think, the Gospel Anchor, respectively. Samuel C. Loveland, a learned Restorationist in Vermont, who, though cordially sympathising with us, still remained a member of the General Convention, publicly offered to write a Commentary on the New Testament for the denomination. Thereupon the said editors came out with such remarks as the following: 'S. C. Loveland, of Redding, Vt., who for some years past has been endeavoring to make himself notorious....very modestly offers to write a Commentary on the New Testament for the Universalists - since Mr. Ballou has declined. We consider him unqualified in every respect for the undertaking. His peculiar views of doctrine are at variance with the great body of Universalists. He possesses little in common with the denomination to which he nominally belongs.' Examiner. 'Whatever our author might furnish in reference to the interesting subject of punishment, would be written in full view of his fabled gulf of purgatorial suffering in the future immortal state - a sentiment which we regard as a relic of heathenism.' etc.etc. Anchor. Such fraternal compliments roused Dolphus Skinner, editor of the Evangelical Magazine, Utica, N. Y., hitherto a quiescent Restorationist, who came out in a powerful article, of which the following is an extract. 'We have all along blamed our Restorationist brethren at the East for seceding from the connection, and supposed that they would never have done it had they possessed a proper spirit of forbearance and charity. But if they experienced many manifestations, from the brethren of opposing views, of a similar spirit and treatment to that which we are now called to notice, we shall cease to wonder at, or blame them for such secession. Nay, we shall

not only approve their course, but can assure these editors and the Universalist public, that a perseverance in, and the general prevalence (among Universalists) of the spirit of these two editors will be followed, not merely by the secession of a dozen clergymen in one State, but by the secession of many scores if not hundreds, throughout the Union'. I should like to quote the whole article, but of course cannot. This closed forever the ultra Universalist policy of making its peculiarism the orthodox of the sect. From that day to this, Restorationism within the denomination has breathed freely, until at length nine-tenths of it are Restorationists. And I venture to say that, in respect to the doctrine of future discipline, and also the care for personal religion zealously promoted throughout the body, the Universalist denomination is much nearer what we set out to make our association, than like its former self when we seceded. That the tide had turned in this direction began to be indicated in 1841. What room was there likely to be for working the machinery of a Restorationist sect between the Unitarians and Universalists under these changed circumstances? Is it probable such a change could have been brought about without the intervention of our secession? Why then not accept the results? We did.

3. The great moral reforms, temperance, anti-slavery, etc. etc. were sweeping across all the religious denominations, throwing theological and ecclesiastical interests into the background for the time, forming new associational ties, and weakening old ones. The Unitarians and Universalists felt this new influence powerfully. Our association felt its full force. A part of us became radicals (and perhaps even zealous) reformers, even to Christian non-resistance and social reorganizationism. The other parts remained (perhaps wisely) conservatives on many points. We had not bitter differences, but honest ones, concerning these upheaving agitations. So it was with several of the older and larger sects. We met in 1841, on our tenth anniversary, and in view of all these changed circumstances, decided to suspend our denominational organization for the then present. It has remained suspended ever since, and there is no good reason why it should be revived. Its mission was a moral necessity, and well fulfilled - to the lasting good of all sects and parties affected by it."1

## CHAPTER III

## General Opinion in the Denomination from 1825-1840

Having studied the core and center of the controversies, the works and doings of participants, it yet remains to gather up what evidence of opinion on future punishment we may find throughout the denomination as a whole.

## A. Believers in Future Punishment, not active in the Controversy.

Dolphus Skinner, whom we know as a Restorationist, in his letters to the Rev. D. C. Lansing, D. D. writes in his last letter (written May 1, 1830, at Ithaca, N. Y.) as follows:

"As it respects those vile characters you named, if it is possible for God to bring such to repentance and save them in this world, is it not equally possible for him to do it in another? Are they not equally subjects of his moral government, and under his control, there as here? then as now? Is his arm there shortened that it cannot save? or is his nature changed from benevolence to hatred by their removal from this to another state of being? In respect to the time when, and place where, they will be brought to repentance, and reconciliation, I am satisfied to leave this with God, and in the language of the Bible, believe 'that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he will gather together (or re-head, restore) in one all things in Christ, whether things in heaven or things in earth. That he hath spoken of the times of the restitution of all things by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began', etc."<sup>1</sup>

Here is a frank admission of future punishment in an argument with an orthodox minister, a Presbyterian, which is really an argument for future probation.

Paul dean, a Seceding Restorationist of Boston, gave in 1832 a course of lectures in defense of a final restoration. This is a work designed to set forth, as he says, the restoration doctrine more in contradistinction to the orthodox doctrine than in opposition to the Universalist doctrine of that time, although he does refer to the doctrines of the Universalists, to whom he had been attached. Paul Dean is not a representative of

1. Dolphus Skinner; A Series of Letters, Utica, 1833, 2d ed. p. 226

the majority sentiment of Restorationists, but is far on the right wing and very close to orthodoxy. In these lectures he states the first principles of Revelation to be as follows:

"1. The moral government of God is a most perfect plan, called in scripture his counsel, will, purpose, pleasure, according to which he works all things in the dispensations of revelation, for the accomplishment of the noblest of objects, i.e. the greatest good of the universe, in relation to which, he is said to see the end from the beginning.

2. All moral and accountable beings were created and destined to serve and enjoy God forever, as their chief good; for God is love, and the Lord is good to all.

3. Though all men were created holy, and for perfect happiness, yet they all having sinned and come short of glory, no one can now be saved but by being restored to virtue; for without holiness no man can enjoy God or heaven.

4. Therefore God being no respecter of persons, sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

5. Death having reigned from Adam to the coming of Christ, therefore, that he (Christ) might be Saviour of all, dominion was given him over the dead in their separate state, as well as over the living in this and the resurrection state; for he is declared to be Lord, and Judge, and Saviour, of the dead and living; so that all will be judged, and all will be saved during the reign of the Messiah.

6. The gospel is the only method of salvation for sinners: for by grace are ye saved, through Jesus Christ, the only name given whereby we must be saved.

7. Death, therefore, being physical and pertaining to the body, can make no moral change in man; for whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, to be rewarded if faithful, to be punished if impenitent, being under the same Lord, and subject to the same moral laws after as before death.

8. So long as men continue in sin, or impenitency, so long they will continue to be punished according to their characters, as attested by their works; but when they exercise repentance towards God; he will, through the blood of Christ, grant them the remission of the sins that are past, and justify and save them by faith in Jesus.

9. The means employed by Christ for the salvation of the world, i.e. faith and repentance, must finally and universally succeed, for the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; and he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

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10 The subjection of all things to Christ will be the same, in character and spirit as will be the subjection of Christ to the Father in conjunction with his kingdom; therefore, when he resigns his kingdom, it will be perfect in its extent, and in the character of its subjects: and thus God will be all in all."<sup>1</sup>

The Restoration doctrine is stated by Dean as he holds it, in the following words: "First, then, the doctrine is briefly this, viz. that God, having created the human race to do his will, and to enjoy his care and goodness, and they having rebelled against his law, and forsaken his service to their own condemnation and ruin, was pleased in conformity to his original design to make known by the gospel, his plan of infinite grace for their salvation or restoration, to the service and happiness for which they were at first created, by turning them from idolatry and confirming them in the habits of practical holiness of heart and life - that for the accomplishment of this most glorious purpose of grace, he instituted the kingdom and government of the Mediator, extending from the commencement of the gospel to the resignation of said kingdom in perfect subjection, at the consummation of all things - that he has constituted all the human race the moral and accountable subjects of the government of Christ, not only while living here, but also in a future state, for all their secret thoughts, feelings and actions, wherever exercised, or committed - that therefore Christ will here or hereafter, and previous to the resignation of his kingdom, reward every man according to his virtue, and punish the wicked according to their neglect of, or disobedience to that gracious gospel that bringeth them salvation, and that he will continue so to punish them, till they by a sincere and hearty repentance towards God, find peace and pardon in believing; and hence, punishment, in all cases, being not an end of Christ's government, but a mean, cannot be endless; for having accomplished its design, it will of necessity subside and give place to the salvation brought to light by the grace of God. From this short statement of Restorationist' views in regard to the purposes of God, the issue of the Redeemer's reign, and of the design and character of punishment; it will be seen that their sentiments do not subvert but establish the scripture doctrine of salvation by grace, and at the same time furnish efficient checks to vice, and the most efficient motives to reformation and the practice of virtue in the present world."<sup>2</sup>

The only clear statement of the Universalist doctrine of the time in the lectures is given thus

"The doctrine which limits rewards and punishments to the present life, is liable to the most serious objections, as being not only unfounded in scripture, and inconsistent with reason and justice; but as leaving vice without a sufficient check, and virtue without an effectual support; and must therefore be licentious in its influence upon society, being neither sufficient to give energy to the moral government of Deity, or to secure the order and peace of a community. And although the advocates of this sentiment

1. Dean: Lectures in Defense of the Final Restoration, pp. 12-14

2. pp. 90-92



arrogantly claim for it the highest character for being benevolent and emendatory, yet nothing can be more manifest to our senses and experience than it is, that in a great variety of cases it utterly fails to produce the least visible emendation of heart or life in multitudes, who notwithstanding it, live and die in sin, and without the least appearance of penitence.

A still more objectionable feature necessarily connected with this doctrine is this, that rewards and punishments are not only limited to the present state, but that they are, by the Divine Counsel, limited to the natural effects or consequences of vice and virtue, in those who practice them, which amounts to a denial of the existence of rewards and punishments, in the common acceptation of those terms. Let this sentiment be followed up to its result, and it will repeal the penalties of all the laws, human and divine; and leave vice uninterrupted and virtue unaided by the Deity or human governments, in their struggle for the mastery in society.

This modern opinion has been adverted to, namely that the reader may see and feel the difference between that and the sentiment above stated, and the difference of their spirit and influence upon good and bad men in the world."<sup>1</sup>

Concerning heaven, Dean says: "Heaven is a pure, spiritual and happy state of the perfected souls and bodies of the redeemed; immortal, sanctified and forever delivered from all suffering and death, and blessed with the beatific vision of God, of Christ and of angels—with a view of the unfolded mysteries of eternity, the glories of redemption, and the joy of saints—an enchanting sense of the divine favor, and of an overflowing gratitude for the unutterable grace which pitied and redeemed them, with the happy assurance of the endless perpetuity of all their bliss. It is not local, that is, its inhabitants do not derive their happiness wholly from the place, but principally from the moral and reconciled state of the soul — from a holy communion with God, and a sacred regard to each other as fellow heirs of glory. Hence the idea that men can go there by means of any physical change, such as death or the resurrection, without any mental preparation or renewal of heart, is most visionary and unfounded. That, however, there is in the universe a place where God will make special manifestation of his glory; where the saints will be gathered and united with the holy angels; and where there will be appropriate and refined pleasures, suited to the spiritualized senses of the immortal body, and that this place is properly called heaven, is most likely."<sup>2</sup>

A further aspect of Dean's belief is seen from the preface:<sup>3</sup>

"An intermediate state of moral consciousness for the soul between death and the resurrection, has also been considered, as sustained by the word of God, and by the economy everywhere observable in the works of Jehovah, which would ill justify the useless sleep of Abraham and others, from their early death to the resurrection. This state is also required by the divine impartiality in the bestowment of the means of grace, which are

1. pp. 98-100

2. pp. 131-132



certainly not equally bestowed on men in the present life; instance the heathen, idiots, infants, to say nothing of others, and hence if the means of grace are ever equalized, they must be equalized in an intermediate state. Further, there are many promises of God which are not accomplished in this life, and if there be no conscious state between death and heaven, they never can be."<sup>1</sup>

In 1833 the ultra Universalist principles brought forth a full report from a Unitarian. This is "Friendly Letters to a Universalist on Divine Rewards and Punishments" by Bernard Whitman. We quote from his introductory epistle to the reader, written in the form of questions by the reader and answers by the author.

"In what sense do you use the term Universalist?" I use it to denote an individual, who believes that a perfect retribution takes place in this world; who denies all future rewards and punishments for the deeds done in the body; who contends that all will be happy like the angels in heaven the moment they enter the next conscious existence, and who declare that no distinctions will exist among mankind beyond the grave.

"What name do you give to the person who believes that all future punishment will terminate in the reformation and consequent happiness of mankind?" I call him a Restorationist. Many of this faith have already separated from the Universalists and organized themselves into a distinct denomination; while others of the same sentiment still remain in the sect of Universalists...

"Have you attacked the distinguishing doctrine of the Restorationist?" I have not. My main object is to establish the certainty of a future righteous retribution. I think there is little or nothing in the following letters to which any of the number will object, whether they are now connected with Unitarians, Universalists, Baptist, Calvinists, Methodists, or Episcopalians. And I do not know why any believers in future retribution should dislike my work, since I have not discussed the question of the duration of future punishment.

"Do you assert that Universalists believe in a perfect earthly retribution?" I do; read the following official declarations. 'The fundamental principle of Universalism is this, that all men shall be rewarded according to their works; that the punishment of sin is not delayed until the future existence, but that it is swift, sure and inevitable. In regard to retribution, this is the doctrine of Universalists.' 'It is a sentiment which distinguishes us from all our religious opponents, that this life is a state of retribution as well as of trial or probation, that here virtue receives an ample reward of happiness, and that here sin meets a competent punishment of misery.' 'There is in the moral government of our heavenly Father, an established ad-

1. Preface pp. v, vi

ministration, which secures to those who love and obey him a present complete reward; and one which delays not to give unto the wicked the reward of his hands. To deny this, however popular the contrary opinion may be, is a moral delirium, a fatal insanity, which not only exposes us to danger, but absolutely plunges us into trouble.'<sup>1</sup>

'Do you assert that Universalists believe no one will be rewarded hereafter for the goodness here acquired?' I do. Read the following official declaration. 'By this rational interpretation we avoid the heathen notion of recompensing men in one state of being for the conduct they do in another. Of all reveries this is the wildest. Jesus nowhere taught that doctrine.'<sup>2</sup>

'Do you assert that Universalists believe that no one will be punished hereafter for the sins of this life?' I do. Read the following official declarations. 'The Universalist does not indeed believe in punishment after death for the sins of this life. Our doctrine is and has been, that men will not be punished in the future world for the sins of this life'. 'Universalists do maintain that punishment in the future state is not threatened in the divine word.'<sup>3</sup>

'Do you assert that Universalists believe that all will be made happy in heaven the moment they enter upon the next conscious existence?' I do. Read the following official declaration. 'Universalists now know of no condition of man beyond the grave but that in which he is as the angels of God in heaven. Let the opponents then refute, if they can, the views of the Universalists of the present day.'<sup>4</sup>

This doctrine, here quoted from authoritative sources, and this doctrine alone, is that which Whitman sought to refute. The means which he used are evident from the following:

'Now, my dear Sir, I firmly believe that your system of Universalism has no foundation in fact or revelation....In the following pages I will endeavor to illustrate the nature of temporal rewards and punishments; to prove that no perfect retribution takes place in this world; to explain the meaning of Christian salvation; to produce some of the arguments from common sense and scripture in proof of a future righteous retribution; to refute the principal objections which your writers have made to this doctrine; to answer the arguments which they have adduced in support of your system; to state my objections to modern, American Universalism, and to conclude with some remarks on the natural tendency of the different views of divine retribution.'<sup>5</sup>

And the author proceeds to do fully and in an orderly manner that

1. Trumpet, Vol. XIII, p. 38, Cobb's Sermon in Christian Intelligencer, 1829. Ballou's Select Sermons, p. 87
2. Trumpet, Vol. XII, p. 134
3. Trumpet, Vol. XIII, p. 42; Vol. 12, pp. 158, 490
4. Trumpet, Vol. XII, p. 58
5. p. 2

which he has set forth to do.

Thomas Whittemore, a leader in the no future punishment fight, notices Whitman's book, in the *Expositor and Universalist Review*, Vol. I New Series, July, 1833, pp. 279-81:

"It becomes us to notice in this place the work just issued from the press, entitled 'Friendly Letters to a Universalist' on Divine Rewards and Punishments' by Rev. Bernard Whitman, of Waltham, Massachusetts. This gentleman is a clergyman of the Unitarian denomination; and, although not sustaining an exalted rank in the order to which he belongs, yet he has made himself popular in the estimation of the public, by his letters to Professor Stuart, and the defense of that publication. It may be that the praise bestowed on his efforts in that case, has been a disadvantage to him.

The work of which we propose now to speak, is not an attack on Universalism, in its simple form, but rather on the views of a certain class of Universalists; though it is somewhat doubtful whether Mr. Whitman represents their views correctly. The occult design evidently is, to widen the distinction between those who hold the doctrine of future punishment for the sins of this life, and those who do not. Hence the main object of the writer is to represent that sentiment as of great importance, and the views of those who reject it, as false and deleterious in the extreme. Whether he believes in endless misery, or the final salvation of all mankind, or the middle doctrine of annihilation, or whether he holds that there is no certain revelation on either of these topics in the Bible, we have not been able to learn from the book. The fact that strikes one first on almost every page, is, that Mr. Whitman is an opponent of the sect of Universalists, and that none are Universalists, except such as reject the doctrine of future punishment. We are here compelled to join issue with him. All those are Universalists who hold to the salvation of all mankind through Jesus Christ; and whatever may be their opinion on unessential, speculative points they may safely and with great propriety unite in the defense and maintenance of their common faith.

It is one of the great faults of this work, that it attempts to make the opinions of one or two individuals the doctrinal standard of the whole body. We have already, in this article, put in our protest against such a practice. Universalists acknowledge no earthly lords or masters, more especially in articles of faith. No one person has been delegated to make 'official statements' in regard to their faith. The only 'official declaration' of their views, is that published several years since by the General Convention of Universalists, in which the doctrine of the eventual salvation of all men is maintained; and other subjects, of comparatively small importance, are left entirely to each one's judgment and conviction, and can not be made a test of membership.

The precise effect that will follow Mr. Whitman's book, we are not

able now to point out. We think, however, we may say, without hying claim in the least to the spirit of prophecy, that so far as the author intended to effect a division in the body of Universalists, he will be utterly disappointed. As a defense of the peculiar doctrine of future punishment, we think the 'Friendly Letters' do by no means rank above the works of Mr. Hudson on that subject. Our ears have been open, but we have heard no one express an opinion that the works required an answer, or would obtain one. The public is not disposed to patronise works on that controversy, which side soever they may defend of the disputed questions. The edition of Mr. Hudson's book has never been sold; and we should not be surprised to learn that the same fate at last attended Mr. Whitman's."

In the same article, entitled "State of the Doctrine and Denomination of Universalists", Whittemore defines Universalism in general as follows:

"The most correct definition which can be given of Universalism, in the form in which it is held by the whole body, is this: 'that God is truly the Father of men; that in his purpose of grace and mercy he has secured the eternal interests of all; that all chastisements are administered in mercy; and that at last God will reconcile all things unto himself....Many individuals among us are distinguished by their peculiar opinions; but the order, as such is distinguished by no doctrine by this - 'the salvation of all mankind by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.'"<sup>1</sup>

What shall be said of Whittemore's answer to Whitman's book? It seems to the writer that Whittemore is proving himself quite a master in the art of evasion. He well knew that the denomination had already split on this subject, and he well knew that the doctrines which Hosea Ballou had developed and which he himself had adopted and was continuously fighting for, did stand as representative of the majority opinion of the Universalist group when the Restorationists were separated from them. But since there has never been any coercion of individuals and especially there has never been any creed or statement of faith worded in absolutely no future punishment phraseology, Whittemore had this loophole. He used it to belittle the sound arguments of Whitman's book and to make the readers of the "Expositor and Universalist Review" feel that the whole matter was not serious. It is our opinion that

the matter was serious at that time, and that Whittmore, except on occasions when cornered, was fighting hotly for strictly no future punishment views as Universalist views.

B. Believers in no future punishment, not active in the Controversy.

Turning now to the echoes of belief in no future punishment in the outskirts of the church, we note first, Rev. Sylvanus Cobb, and from a sermon preached in 1827 and repeated in Malden, Massachusetts, in 1832, take the followings:

"The scriptures which we have now quoted on the subject of the literal resurrection, represent it as introducing all the subjects of it into a state wholly free from all principles of corruption, from guilt, shame, and condemnation. And this representation is never opposed by any scripture, where the connections require it to be applied to this subject.

If any will yet contend for a sinful, shameful, and corrupt resurrection state, they must show us some other resurrection, some other first fruits, besides what the scriptures reveal. Christ is the First fruits, and the only First fruits from the dead into immortality, which the Gospel knows. There is no Gospel ground on which to expect any immortal state for man, but that state of 'life and immortality' which Jesus 'brought to life' through his resurrection. And there is no more scripture authority to dispute that in that state 'we shall bear the image of the heavenly', than that in this state 'we have borne the image of the earthly'. I know that some have said that this account relates to the bodies, merely, with which the dead shall be raised; that they shall be raised with incorruptible, glorious, spiritual, and heavenly bodies, while their minds may be subject to moral evils.... It will be impossible for them to support any such thing as sin, or moral evil, in connection with such an incorruptible, glorious, spiritual and heavenly, physical state. I do not contend that a physical change is a moral change, but I maintain that all the moral wrong with which we are acquainted is induced, either directly or indirectly, by physical circumstances; and that of course such a physical change as will exclude those circumstances which induce to moral wrong, will exclude moral evil.

It is an acknowledged fact that the spirit or mind of man never chooses to do wrong for the sake of the wrong. When the mind consents to sin, it is by the inducement of some want, appetite, or passion, of this earthly natural 'Every man is tempted', saith St. James, 'when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.' And St. Paul, naming a long catalogue of sins, embracing the principles of all the sins in the world, calls them 'the works of the flesh'



that is, the mind is induced to consent to them by the wants, lusts, or desires of this earthly nature. It is plain, therefore, that when the mind is raised into the inheritance of, and is organized and called into action with, incorruptible, glorious, spiritual, and heavenly bodies, it can never be swayed by inducements to any of those sins. Even the sin of unreconciliation to God, or to the allotments of his providence, is induced by the physical pains and infirmities of this mortal state; - consequently no such unreconciliation can be induced in a state free from pain, from want, and from every principle of corruption. Finally, it is a plain case that the dead are to be raised into such a state as shall exclude every physical and moral evil. Indeed, the subjection of all men, in the resurrection morn, to the kingdom of Christ, which is a moral kingdom of light and purity, is expressly certified by St. Paul, in connection with his testimony of the resurrection of all men in Christ.\*1

In "Universalism Illustrated and Defended, being a System of doctrinal and practical divinity deduced from Reason and Revelation", by Otis A. Skinner, pastor of the Fifth Universalist Society in Boston, published in 1839, we find him to have been in the ~~no~~ future punishment group.

"4. The Savior says, in the resurrection we shall be equal to the angels, we shall be children of God being children of the resurrection. Angels are holy and happy; and we shall be equal to them. Angels are immortal, therefore, it is said, we shall die no more. All this will result from being children of the resurrection. It is this that makes us children of God; children in the highest and most endearing sense; not children such as we are here, - corrupt, wayward, and ignorant, but holy and glorious, children like those pure spirits that minister before his throne!

5. The resurrection introduces us into the kingdom of endless blessedness.

6. We shall all be equal in the resurrection. 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' Here is no distinction; some are not made happy, and others miserable.

7. The resurrection is spoken of as a victory over death, the grave and sin....

Consider also the nature, extent and ravages of sin. Its reign has ever been universal. All men, in all parts of the world, civilized and uncivilized; all men of all ranks, high, low, rich, poor, ignorant and learned, have been subjected to its power. Throughout the whole broad earth, no bright and sunny spot has been found free from its ravages and violence....It is a plant which grows in all climes and seasons; which flourishes upon the mountain

1. From a sermon delivered in the Meeting House of the First Parish in Malden, Mass. Jan. 1, 1832, by Sylvanus Cobb, pastor, pp. 10-12



and in the valley, in storm and in sunshine. Not only so - it is mighty in strength. It sweeps over the world like a tornado, levelling with the dust all the barriers of human wisdom and strength. The mightiest minds of earth have been prostrated by its malignant power; armies marching forth in all the pride of military pomp and splendor, and before which kingdoms have crumbled, republics bowed in servile submission, and the world itself trembled in fear, have been cut down by the vengeance of its arm. Cunning and strength, malignity and cruelty, constitute the nature of this great enemy of man. What a triumph then, will be a victory over sin! What a cause of gratitude and thanksgiving to God!

Such is the triumph of the resurrection. Who can conceive of a victory to be compared with this? When an army fighting in defense of freedom and life is triumphant, its friends are filled with joy; but their joy is mingled with sorrow, for they reflect on the widows and orphans that are made; on the groans and agonies of those bleeding and dying upon the field of battle. In the victory of the resurrection, there is no cause of regret. This is a victory in which a world is redeemed and saved; in which all men triumph over every cause of human misery and grief!"

In a little volume entitled "The Preacher, A Collection of Sermons from various Authors, Doctrinal and Practical", published in New York in 1839, for the benefit of isolated Universalists and Universalist groups having no stated preaching, two of the eighteen sermons are on the certainty of punishment. The first is by Rev. William Whittaker, and reflects, though not in an extreme form, the conviction that sin is punished in this life. The other was given by George W. Quinby, Littlemore, Maine, on Galatians 6:7,8. Towards the close of his sermon he shows us his views in the following words; (which, by the way, echo some of Ballou's writings):

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Would either of you who are agriculturalists sow one kind of seed, with the expectation of reaping a crop of another? None but an insane man or a fool would do this. You always reap of the same kind with that you sow; and not only so, but you reap where you sow. If you sow wheat, from the same you gather wheat. If you sow in your own field, in that field, and not in your neighbor's do you reap the products thereof. And so it is in moral and spiritual matters. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, wrath, strife, hatred, etc. But the fruit of

1. pp. 288-293

the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc.' Here are plainly set before you by the author of our text, the various fruits of both the flesh and the spirit. And be not deceived, for as true as God himself is true; as surely as that effect follows a cause, or that there is any dependence in philosophy, he that sows to the flesh, will of the flesh (while in the flesh, not in eternity) reap corruption, moral degradation and death. 'The wages of sin is death'. And just as certain, will that individual who sows to the spirit, reap a corresponding harvest - possess that life which consists in a knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.\*1

#### C. Evidences of Moderate and Neutral Attitudes in the Denomination, at large.

In addition to future punishment belief and also no future punishment belief, in the outskirts of the denomination, there are echoes of a tolerant feeling on the subject, a middle ground attitude in doctrine. Says Eddy:

"We have no information that this question of future punishment was agitated in any Associations or Conventions of Universalists outside New England, except in a solitary instance in the state of New York. Rev. S. R. Smith, in a sketch of the session of the 'Western Association' at Fly Creek, Otsego County, on the first Wednesday in June, 1823, mentioning that the Rev. Edwin Ferriss made 'a request for permission to withdraw from the fellowship of the association', adds: 'The principal, indeed, the only reason which he assigned for that extraordinary and abrupt procedure, was that he was a believer in future limited punishment, and as that doctrine was not made an essential prerequisite for the ministry, he could not voluntarily and conscientiously remain in fellowship. He still professed, what he had always done, that in heart and soul, in faith, and hope, and trust, he was a Universalist. However momentous the reason might appear to himself, it was one which, if it operated at all, should have done so through the preceding twenty years. For it is morally certain that during that whole period, the candidate for fellowship or ordination, had never once been asked whether he did, or did not believe in future limited punishment....It was well known to most of the clergymen present, that a movement was in progress in New England, to effect a permanent division of the denomination, on the question of future disciplinary punishment, And the meeting of the Association might perhaps have been regarded by him as a favorable opportunity for testing the views and feelings of that body on the subject. If that was the intention, the experiment must have been entirely satisfactory. For though it was quite certain that a large majority of both ministers and laymen sympathized with him in opinion, his request for withdrawal was quietly granted, with scarcely a remark concerning the doctrine of future limited punishment.

Here began, and here ended, all attempts - if indeed this was so intended - to agitate the subject of division in our Councils in the State of New York. Mr. Ferrisssoon grew weary of standing and acting alone; and in 1827 he applied for, and received the fellowship of the Chenango Association, within the limits of which he resided."<sup>1</sup>

And the Rev. Dolphus Skinner, himself a Restorationist, says that in New York "though there are differences in view, we know of none in feeling."<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. A. D. Gresh, editor of The Christian Visitant, published in Utica, N. Y. has a moderate stand which we find evidences of in his magazine.

He says:

"Believing them (the scriptures) to be thus profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, that the servant of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works....we do most devoutly believe that every promise and every threatening made in them, and related to a period yet future, will be fully performed and completely fulfilled to the honor, glory, and praise of God, and to the benefit, satisfaction, and final salvation of man.

.....though mankind are, by creation, the children of God, yet they may, in a more peculiar manner, become characteristically the children of their Father which is in heaven, by imitating his impartial goodness and universal perfections. We believe that man is a moral agent, and, as such, an accountable being - that he will certainly be punished for every crime he commits and rewarded for every virtuous act he performs. We also believe that man was, by his Maker, 'made subject to vanity', gifted with limited powers and faculties, and is, therefore, a finite being, capable of performing finite actions only - actions deserving none other than finite rewards and finite punishments. But, as man is the offspring of God, who has given us this life as a free gift, (it being unearned and unpurchased by our exercise of faith, works, or other conditions) so we contend that the immortal, incorruptible, or endless life of holiness and enjoyment, which will be conferred on all mankind in the resurrection, will also be the free, unpurchased gift of our heavenly parent. Believing thus, we contend that man's real and highest interest is to be virtuous; inasmuch as virtue and happiness, on the one hand, and vice and misery, on the other hand, are as inseparably connected as cause and effect; so that without a firm reliance on God and obedience to his commandments there can be no real happiness - or, in other words, 'follow after peace with all men; and holiness, without which no man shall see (enjoy) the Lord'".<sup>3</sup>

Again, by the same author in the February and March issues in 1833:

"The punishment annexed to a breach of his (God's) laws, will be

1. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, pp. 314-315

2. Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, p. 335

3. Christian Visitant, January, 1832, pp. 4-5

inflicted without fail on every transgressor; and for every transgression. He will by no means clear the guilty. He will render to every man according to his works. But he will not punish.....merely to obtain suffering, but he will punish as a means to procure satisfaction to every demand of his nature, his laws and his attributes. And that satisfaction will be obtained. God cannot be disappointed. His love will receive the love - his mercy the happiness - his justice the obedience of every intelligent being in the universe. Jesus will reign until all things are subdued to his government - until sin and death are no more - then will he deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, and God will be all in all."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Russell Streater had been in 1817 and 1818 an avowed believer in future punishment<sup>2</sup>, but during the period following, he seems to have been won over to an outwardly neutral, at least, attitude. In 1833 he published "Twelve Familiar Conversations between Inquirer and Universalist", in which we get his views as he would teach them to an inquirer, and as he no doubt was teaching them continually to inquirers.

"Inquirer: A query arose in my mind a few minutes since, which I had like to have forgotten to mention. It regards an important point of doctrine which seems to have been purposely or accidentally omitted by the sage framers of your creed and the founders of this highly pleasing doctrine, in America. There is nothing said about the moral agency and accountability of the creature. Nothing is said of sin and its punishment; whether the whole penalty of the divine law is endured in this life, or not at all, or in the future. How shall I understand this matter?

Universalist: How shall you understand it, my good friend? Why, by divesting yourself as much as possible of prejudice, and looking over the matter with more care. You imagine that our Creed, as you call it, presents no declaration concerning the moral accountability of man; and yet, the first article reads, 'We believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest, and final destination of mankind'. What 'duty' could a man owe to his Maker, if he was not a morally accountable agent? And what 'interest' could he have in doing his duty, if he suffered nothing by disobedience? The words 'moral agency and accountability' it is true, are not mentioned in the article; neither are they in the scriptures. The article is truly Protestant, leaving everyone at full liberty to read and judge for himself, in regard to the nature of sin, and the time and duration of its punishment; all agreeing, however, that sin and misery are finite, and cannot extend beyond 'the times of restitution', 'the dispensation of the fullness of times', or 'the delivering up of the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all'. And, certainly, there

1. p. 72

2. See Eddy: Ibid. Vol. II, p. 288

was no necessity for introducing that topic into the profession of faith.

Inquirer: Indeed there was not! And why so, pray tell me? Why not rather the utmost propriety in giving it a place?

Answer: Universalist: For the plainest of all possible reasons; because if there is any express revelation on the subject, there was no more necessity for naming it in the Articles of Belief, than there was that Adam and Eve died in the day of transgression; etc....If plainly revealed, each one could read it for himself. But, if there be no express revelation upon the subject of punishment, as to the precise time when it shall be administered, in all cases, it would have been highly improper for the framers of a common Profession of Faith, to have interlarded it with human speculations, in regard to which there might have been a difference of opinion, even amongst themselves. It would have introduced a mere bond of contention and discord. From my very heart then, I venerate the wisdom and prudence which the confession before us exhibits. In regard to questions of doubtful revelation, if I may so speak, let everyone, if he can, be fully persuaded in his own mind. But for myself, I neither believe nor disbelieve theories concerning a future world, of which we have no express revelation in scripture."<sup>1</sup>

Again:

"Be careful to understand me. I am establishing the fact, that sinners are certainly punished in the earth; from which it follows, as a natural consequence, that if men persist in sinning in a future state, they will certainly meet their reward."<sup>2</sup>

And again:

Universalist: You labor under an egregious mistake, dear Sir. Nothing is said about the offers of mercy, nor a way being provided for ~~men~~ to be saved. The salvation is given, not offered. Christ was to give eternal life to as many as the Father had committed to his charge; not offer to give it. Some 'neglect this great salvation', for the time being; but they could not neglect what did not exist....The salvation of the Lord therefore, is impartial, glorious, and universal. And when this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, the shout of myriads of myriads, as so many trumpet-notes of victory, will burst forth. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup>

There is a most interesting sidelight on the opinion in the denomination given us by two debates held in 1833 and 1834. The debate of 1833 is

known as the Danvers Discussion, held at Danvers, Massachusetts. It is

1. pp. 47-49

2. p. 106

3. pp. 156-167



published under the following title: "A Report of the Discussion at Danvers, Massachusetts, on November 8, 1833, between Reverend N. P. Braman and Thomas Whittemore." The two opponents warmed up to their task by a series of letters written to each other, from which we quote. Thomas Whittemore writes in one letter:

"You propose, in the second place, that there shall be two propositions for discussion, viz. first, Will any of the human race be punished after death, (which question shall come under consideration first, independently of the second) and second, Is this punishment eternal? I made but one simple proposition to you, Sir, and that was, 'whether the doctrine of endless misery is revealed in the holy scriptures.' Nothing else can be obtruded into this discussion by my consent. Why do you propose to discuss with me the question of future limited punishment? If you do believe in future punishment in distinction from eternal punishment? If you do not, why should you and I discuss it? and if you do, you are a Universalist, and there is no ground of dispute... Now the subject of difference between you and me is not whether future limited punishment is true, for you do not believe that doctrine. The two opposing doctrines are, endless misery, and Universal Salvation. You hold the former and I the latter. I propose to discuss the question whether the former doctrine is revealed in the word of God, and no other question. You now bring up another question, concerning future limited punishment, which you think I do not believe, and you know you do not believe yourself. Why then should we discuss it, on the supposition that neither of us believes it?....If you will come out and openly and frankly confess that you believe in future punishment in distinction from endless, then there will be a propriety in discussing that question; but then it will not be an orthodox clergyman and a Universalist in debate; it will be two Universalists, debating on a minor point."

Braman replied as follows:

"I am exceedingly at a loss to understand why you are unwilling to have the proposed subject of discussion divided. Are you not an advocate for the doctrine that none of the human race will experience any suffering after death? Have you not preached and published this doctrine for several years? Does not your paper advocate it? Do you not profess to believe that the very prevailing opinion, that there will be punishment of any degree or duration in a future state, can be proved to be an error, by the most irrefragable arguments from the Bible?.,....

I will now give my reasons for insisting on a division of your proposition, as first contemplated.

1. The first question, viz. whether any of the human race will be



punished after death, is one, on which I suppose there is an entire disagreement between us; you maintain the negative, and I the affirmative.....

2. I consider it a question of great importance.

3. The sentiment of no suffering after death is the prevalent one in both the Universalist societies in this town, and is taught by both the stated preachers, as I am informed. It is of vital consequence, therefore, to both your denomination and my own, to have this subject taken distinctly into consideration, in our proposed debate.

4. The very discourse which gave occasion to your challenge was directed principally, wholly, I may say, against what is sometimes called ultra Universalism,—that which denies all retributory distinctions in the future world. I believe I said not a word on the duration of the punishment, which I attempted to prove was denounced in the Bible upon the finally impenitent. This discourse you wished me to publish, that you might have an opportunity to refute its arguments, if deemed, as they doubtless would have been, inconclusive. Now if you was willing, if you was very desirous to discuss the question whether there be any future retribution, on paper, why do you object to discussing it orally?"

Mr. Whittemore made a very sharp reply:

"In the first place, however you regard these questions, I regard them, as two, and am more inclined to act in reference to my own convictions than the convictions of others. I cannot let you decide for me....So

Second, I not only regard the question of future punishment in distinction from endless, as a different question, but I regard it to be of minor importance. If you do not agree with me, I cannot help it. But I think we do not differ on this point. Do you not hold that the doctrine of a strictly endless punishment in distinction from punishment in any other sense, is a doctrine of paramount importance? If so, you hold the question you propose to be of minor importance, as well as myself....For you aim, as I judge, that the discussion shall turn on the minor point, and not on the principal doctrine of your creed.

You wish to know, whether I will accept a challenge from you to debate the point, 'Whether any of mankind will suffer after this life', at any

time previous to the discussion I proposed. No, I will not. It is time enough for you to make challenges, when you have accepted the one I made at first. This is but another attempt to push out of sight the main question I proposed. You profess to believe in endless torment; and if you will prove that doctrine in the debate, we shall be saved the necessity of debating the minor question. At present I have no desire to debate that question with anybody - at any rate, I will not be driven or wheedled into it. If discussed at all, it is a more proper question for Universalists to discuss among themselves; and I will not set the example of permitting an orthodox clergyman, a staunch and undoubted believer in endless misery, to put his own darling doctrine of eternal torment aside, and give precedence to the doctrine of torment in any other shape; for the sentiment which you call 'Sultra' is not essential to Universalism, but the doctrine of endless torment is essential to Orthodoxy."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Whittemore had things his way, and the discussion was held on the question of endless punishment. Yet it was during these very years, as we have already discovered, that the fight was hottest between the Restorationists and the Universalists, sometimes called ultra-Universalist, group. Thomas Whittemore was the young fighter of the Universalist side, Adin Ballou of the Restorationists.

A very like situation occurred in Philadelphia the next year in a discussion of the conjoining question "Is the Doctrine of Endless Punishment taught in the Bible, or does the Bible teach the Doctrine of Final Holiness and Happiness of all Mankind?" This discussion proceeded between Dr. Ely, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, and Abel C. Thomas, pastor of the First Universalist Church of that city. It was

1. pp. 10-16

published under the same title in 1835. Mr. Thomas, the Universalist minister, in correspondence preceding the real discussion, says:

"In relation to 'which of the many prevalent systems of universal salvation' I 'judge to be true' I need only observe, that I believe the Bible furnishes no evidence of a punishment beyond the present life."<sup>1</sup>

Ely replied:

"Philadelphia, January 31, 1834. Dear Sir: I desired to know distinctly what scheme of universal salvation you believe to be true, that our controversy might be brought within reasonable limits. The Universalists who are called Restorationists, have proved, I think, unanswerably from the Bible, that there shall be punishment experienced by sinful men in a state of existence after the present. They have also attempted to show, without success, in my judgment, that after future punishment has been experienced for some finite, but indefinite, time, there will be, in the lapse of everlasting ages, a restoration of all human beings to happiness.

From your last letter I learn that you are not of their number. You have furnished me with two propositions which you are willing to support.

First, you assert....that you feel yourself obligated to believe whatever doctrine can be fairly and clearly established by scripture testimony.....

Secondly, you assert....that you 'believe the Bible furnishes no evidence of a punishment beyond the present life.'

This doctrine is held by some, in connection with an opinion that this is man's only state of existence, and according to their theory, there is no future state for mankind, either of happiness or of misery; because man at death ceases to exist.

Others hold, that all men who arrive at the moment of death without having repented, will thereafter be annihilated; and so, on the principle of the Destructionists will escape all future punishment.

Others teach, that in the moment of entering the future spiritual state of existence, every man not before converted to God will become a renewed person, a child of God, a lover of holiness, and so will escape all future punishment.

Others again teach, that the present is the only state of retribution for man; that the judgment is already past; that strict, full, and final justice is done to all men in this life; and that the life to come is a state of happiness resulting from the mere, unmingled mercy of God, irrespective of

the claims of justice, which have all been satisfied in relation to each individual before his death, by the punishment of his sins in his own person.

Others, finally, teach, that when men come to die, whatever may have been their sins, and whether they have repented of them or not in this world, Christ has, by his mediatorial work, and full satisfaction for all the sins of all men, secured to them an immediate introduction to heaven. This is what they call universal salvation by free grace.

I should like to know upon which of these grounds you judge, that there is no punishment beyond the present life; or if you have some other scheme of universal salvation from all future punishment, which has not been named, that you would frankly disclose it."

In his retort Mr. Thomas says:

"There are but three systems of Universalism,

1st. Calvinism Improved - chiefly differing from Calvinism in supposing a universal vicarious atonement, and in the consequent salvation of all men. Edward Mitchell, of New York, is, I believe, the only public advocate of this form of Universalism in the United States.

2d. Arminianism Extended - the system advocated by Winchester, Chauncy, and others. It extended probation into the future state, and allowed of future limited punishment, resulting in the final holiness and happiness of all mankind. This system is held by many Universalists - and prominently by the 'Massachusetts Restorationist Association'.

3d. In noticing the third system, I shall give you my own views premising that they are the views of a large majority of American Universalists. 1st. I believe that God 'will render to every man according to his deeds,' that is, according to his own deeds, Rom. 2:6; consequently I reject the doctrine of vicarious atonement. 2d. I believe that 'the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, and the wicked and the sinner,' Prov. 11:31; consequently, 'I believe the Bible furnishes no evidence of a punishment beyond the present life.' 3d. I believe that God 'will reconcile all men to himself', that 'God may be all in all'. Col. 1:20; I Cor. 15:28. And this salvation I believe to be 'the gift of God, and not of works, lest any man should boast.' Eph. 2:8,9.

Although I have been thus particular in stating my Bible creed, I wish to have it distinctly understood, that in the present controversy, I shall confine my remarks to the two prominent doctrines of endless punishment, on the one hand, and the final holiness and happiness of all mankind, on the other. With topics of minor importance I shall have nothing to do, excepting so far as they may have a direct bearing on the general issue."<sup>1</sup>

Here are two specific cases of no future punishment Universalists

refusing to debate on their particular brand of Universalism, but compelling the orthodox opponent to hold the debate on the question of endless misery or universal salvation.

The adverse criticism during this period has value for our study. The Rev. Joel Hawes wrote ten letters containing reasons for not embracing the doctrine of universal salvation in which he says:

"In pursuing the subject before us, I have felt no small embarrassment from the fact that Universalists possess no uniform character. They are restorationists, destructionists, strict universalists, or fatalists, as will best serve their purpose, which is, at any rate, to get rid of the doctrine of endless punishment."<sup>1</sup>

Canfield, in his Candid Review of these letters quotes this, but has no adequate retort. This took place in 1827.

In 1834 a pastor rose up and wrote "Modern Universalism Exposed". The pastor was Parsons Cooke of Ware, Massachusetts. He says:

"Whatever the causes may be which bring so many to the belief of this doctrine, it is not the perception of any firm and satisfactory reasoning in the case, as may be shown from the shifting and varying character of the premises on which it has been built. The premises have often been changed, while the conclusion has remained. That the proof may be adopted and then set aside, like almanacs when out of date, and yet the same conclusion remain and that the same mind could at the same time draw conviction from opposite premises, is the conclusion to which the history of Universalism would bring us. - The first Universalists were Restorationists, believing in a purgatorial punishment in the future world. Next comes in the doctrine of no punishment in the future world, built on some of the doctrines of Calvinism caricatured. Next, these grounds are abandoned, and the same doctrine comes forward under the auspices of Messrs. B, and W, and their coadjutors, sustained by such interpretations as we have been examining. Some will have it that the obvious understanding of some passages of the Bible, brings us to the doctrine of eternal punishment, but the doctrine not being in itself reasonable, and consistent with the known goodness of God, those passages must be so explained away, as to consist with more rational views. Others will have us believe that all passages of the Bible are obviously consistent with the doctrine of no future punishment. But as the conscience cannot at all times and in all persons be made to see with such eyes, the original doctrine of restoration is held by many as a sort of reserve ground, to flee to when driven from the more comforting doctrine of no hell at all. That different minds should stand

1. Russell Canfield: Candid Review, p. 152

on grounds so opposite, is not marvelous; but that one and the same mind should hold them both at once, shows that the conclusion is regarded as more important than the means of coming at it. My observation much deceives me if it be not true of the great mass of the Universalists, and more especially of the more intelligent of them, that they feel about an equal confidence and interest in both these systems - opposite as they are in respect to grounds of proof. The expression has gone into a proverb among those who profess to believe in no future punishment, that the restoration system 'is better than nothing'. And inconsistent as it is with their professed belief, they cherish it with a strong affection. And they guard with a jealous care against any controversy with Restorationists, (see Preliminaries to the Danvers Discussion) and the reader is requested to bear in mind the question, whether there is not among this class of Universalists, much of playing fast and loose, respecting the grounds on which they are willing to rest their system, that he may satisfy himself by future observation. Refute before them Mr. Balfour's positions, and even those who have been wont to look at this author as their oracle, are ready to say - 'We never agreed with Mr. B. on that point'. Or, 'We had always our doubts about it.'. Now the conclusion to which all this brings us is, that Universalism originates rather in the desire of the mind, than in the force of solid proofs. The conclusion seems to have been antecedent to the proofs. It is a fabric that can stand as well without an underpinning as with it. And the foundation can be slipped from beneath it, and exchanged for another, as often as it is conceived another can be found of more decent appearance. The underpinning, by the way, is used only for appearance sake. If Mr. B.'s system be the true one, the Universalism which existed before this was invented, must have been believed without known and sufficient reasons. A system of doctrines, under so little obligations to its proofs, that it can discard and renew them at pleasure, must be rather the offspring of man's convenience and desires, than the result of impartial study of the word of God.<sup>1</sup>

Luther Lee published in 1836 at Watertown, N. Y. a volume entitled

Universalism Examined and Refuted, in which he says:

"It is, doubtless, generally understood that there are two classes of Universalists, distinguished from each other by a difference of belief respecting the time when sinners receive their punishments; one maintaining that all punishment is confined to this life, while the other class, commonly called Universal Restorationists, admit that those who die in sin and unbelief will be punished after death. But while they differ in this respect, they both agree in maintaining the certain and final salvation of all men, and in controversy with those who believe in the doctrine of endless punishment, they generally merge this difference, and refuse to take ground on the question of future punishment. Their reasons for this course are obvious; each theory has its difficulties, which they can avoid only by refusing to avow or deny either. If the doctrine of future punishment is denied, so many absurdities are involved, and so many and clear are the declarations of scripture to the contrary, that but few dare venture the entire cause of



universalism on the supposition that there is no punishment after death, without holding in reserve the doctrine of restoration from hell, through which to escape, should it prove true that sinners will be punished in a future state. On the other hand, if the doctrine of future punishment be admitted, the circumstances which must attend punishment in a future state, unfavorable to a moral reform in hell, press so hard upon the theory, that it is very rarely the case that men, believing in universal salvation, will unreservedly rest their cause on a redemption from hell in a future world. Under these circumstances, when a universalist is asked by an opponent, if he believes in punishment after death or not, he is as much put to it for an answer as the Pharisees were when Christ asked them if the baptism of John was from heaven or of men."<sup>1</sup>

These hostile critics of the denomination, writing during the period when the controversy was hottest, testify unitedly that the main interest of the group as a whole is the distinguishing doctrine of universal <sup>future</sup> salvation, and that the question of future punishment or no/punishment is one which can easily be disregarded, by a great majority of the ministers and laity.

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1. pp. 113, 114

## CHAPTER IV

## Results of the Controversy

Having traced the thought of the Universalists on future punishment from the time when their minds were united and satisfied in the simple faith that God will "finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness", as they phrased it in their Profession of Faith, through a long period of questioning, and then polemic on the subject, it is natural to ask what are the consequences of all this controversy, aside from such as show up naturally in the changes of thought in the following periods, which last we shall examine in a separate section.

The most obvious fact is that the matter of future punishment was not settled by the controversy, (by the time it closed). The new theology, of Hosea Ballou, had been set forth at the very beginning of this period. Its implications as to punishment in general were worked out, though largely in the form of polemic against hell, by Ballou himself in that work, "The Treatise on the Atonement". This work contained much that was new and startling, but was eagerly read and adopted as the faith of Universalism. By the end of this period of controversy, the general Universalist ideas concerning punishment, i.e. that it is corrective and consequential, were well established in the minds of all Universalists. This would have happened anyway, in all probability, though perhaps not as rapidly. And future punishment was still unsettled. Let us note conditions in detail.

A. The church groups which had seceded returned into the Universalist fold. The secession was small at the very beginning, comprising nine ministers

or so, and probably not more than a dozen churches were involved. At least one church and pastor went over into the Unitarian church during the period of separation. Few, if any, new adherents were gained to the Restorationist cause, as a separate movement, during its course as such. Hence the conclusion is inevitable that the numbers of the churches and lay people coming back into the denomination in 1840 and 1841 were small, and that their influence after they did get back was slight, both because they were few, and because they were strategically yielders and not holders of a chosen position.

B. The Restorationist ministers did not all come back, if we may trust the remarks of Thomas Whittemore in his "Autobiography", written in 1847-48, though he had no love for any of these men.

"Mr. Wood left the ministry; (the man who appears to have instigated the first stage of the controversy). Mr. Turner (the first to discuss the question with Ballou) lost the society in Charlestown; and, although he continued with the Universalists some few years longer, he hardly seemed to belong to us, and at last he changed his relations to the Unitarians. Mr. Dear became the pastor of a newly formed society in Boston; but it did not flourish, and his pulpit and himself were soon given up to the same sect. Mr. Briggs died, after he had lost all influence; Mr. Barzillai Streeter left the ministry; and Mr. Hudson (whose work we have extensively noted) transferred himself from the sacred desk to the arena of politics."<sup>1</sup>

C. But Mr. Whittemore himself had long since ceased giving his full time and labors to the Universalist church. Defection to other work is not peculiar to Restorationists! We know both from his autobiography, and from a "Biographical Sketch" by Sawyer, in the "Universalist Miscellany" for February, 1849, that Mr. Whittemore did not hold a pastorate after 1831. The latter also tells us that Whittemore went at once into the Massachusetts legislature, and then, after referring to the Danvers discussion, of 1833, goes on to say:

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1. pp. 314-5

"About this time Mr. Whittemore commenced a series of labors, continued for more than a dozen years, as a Temperance Lecturer. In town-houses, city-halls, meeting-houses of all sects, on sabbaths and secular days, his voice was often heard in favor of this good cause."<sup>1</sup>

D. W. Ballou remained of the same opinion at the end as at the beginning of the controversy. So also did Sylvanus Cobb, who is less excusable for it, as he was a whole generation younger. He was a young man just entering the ministry when the controversy arose, he was in Malden, Massachusetts, not far from the seat of conflict, which was Boston, during the years 1828-37 as pastor of the Universalist church of that place, yet in his autobiography he passes off the whole matter contemptuously in a few paragraphs. He remained to the end of his days a strict believer in no future punishment, following Ballou, and hence desired to make that controversy appear a mere nothing, during which his side was gradually losing ground. He remarks, in telling of his visit to Massachusetts in 1822:

"But my enjoyment of this evening's entertainment was somewhat abridged, by the matter and spirit of the principal conversation between Bro. Turner and Streeter. They were continuously discussing, as parties interested in the movement, the project which I found to my regret to be afoot, for a division of the denomination on the question of a limited future or post mortem punishment. The believers in such punishment were to go out and organize a distinct denomination, under the name of Universal Restorationists, or something similar. And these two brethren were very innocently calculating that the most polished and literary of the denomination would go with them into the new organization.

We in the State of Maine had been baptized into the Spirit of God as the universal Father, and of Christ as the universal Saviour, and of humanity as a universal brotherhood. We regarded sin as the shame and curse of man, wherever it is; and labored to show our people this fact; that they might hate and discard sin, not only as dishonoring the God they loved, but also as degrading and cursing their own being. But we felt neither authorized nor disposed to extend sin's reign into the "life and immortality" 'brought to light through the gospel'. And to whatever of private speculations individuals might sometimes indulge their genius upon

in relation to temporary evil in the land of promise, we gave no importance by giving it marked consideration. Indeed, the moral power of our ministry was the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."<sup>1</sup>

After a few more paragraphs of slight value, the subject is closed, or rather passed off. The split is not referred to, nor anything more of the discussion and agitation, although this was written after 1860, and the full results of the whole agitation were showing up. Sylvanus Cobb did not desire to see them, nor hear of them, nor think of them. In this there were doubtless a few standing with him.

B. As to the theological achievements of the period, they are positive. First, the concept of punishment as remedial and consequential was presented clearly, accepted eagerly, and by the end of the period generally established.

Second, Ballou and those who aided him worked out the implications of remedial and consequential punishment for the present life more vigorously and rapidly than they would have done had they not been stirred by the controversy. Says E. G. Brooks, in "Our New Departure", published in 1873:

"The Ballouian period, in the order of our development, did incalculable service, not alone to us, but to the whole Christian world, in this respect. Herein, doubtless, was its providential purpose. Up to that period, the whole interest of our being was focalized in the future world. Everything here was thought to be morally at loose ends - the wicked not punished; the good not rewarded; every man left to love as he might list, with occasion only to think of that terrible day of account yonder, when the books are to be opened, and all are to be brought to judgment. So far as this world is concerned, the whole current of theological teaching averred, there is no motive to live a godly life, the preponderance of opinion being rather on the side of a life of sin, were it not for the terrible hour of recompense that is coming; but then all the hardships and sacrifices of the good are to be paid for by the felicities of heaven, and all the rejoicings and prosperities all the bad are to be balanced by the torments of hell. Thus time was nothing.

Eternity was everything. Hosea Ballou - speaking of him as leader and representative - made war against all this. He proclaimed God's instant and constant moral rule. He appealed to the Bible, and familiarized the popular ear with the statements, long overlooked, that God 'verily is a God that judgeth in the earth'; that, 'though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished'; that 'the way of transgressors is hard'; that 'there is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked'; and that, while 'to be carnally minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace'. He did not fail to recognize the fact that time is often required for certain judgments to culminate and burst upon evil-doers, as also for certain fruits of righteousness to ripen into most conspicuous display. But, he iterated and reiterated, God reigns nevertheless, holding every soul to rigid account. He never suspends payment, or does business on credit; but by inviolable laws, according to what one is in character, must every moment, be his experience of loss and pain, or peace. And, thus preached, how this doctrine was ridiculed and denounced! What weapons of sarcasm, and argument, and misapplied Scripture were launched against it! What idiocy and 'moral insanity' it was alleged to indicate! What appeals to appearances and seeming facts were made, often 'with great, swelling words' to demonstrate how opposed it was to the lessons of actual daily life! But, despite all, the testimony was persistently given, and, with untiring pertinacity, the Bible was cited, history and experience were invoked, and the nature of things, and the necessities of spiritual law, were adduced in its support and demonstration. As the result, no moral philosophy would now be thought sound that did not include this doctrine as one of its cardinal ideas; and no intelligent pulpit, at all breast of the time, fails more or less positively to enforce it. Had Hosea Ballou done nothing else except so to put into the thought and consciousness of Christendom this vital fact concerning the instant and constant operation of God's moral government, he would deserve to be honored as one of the world's great reformers; and while most of us now are compelled to think, and on occasion do not scruple to say, that in our judgment some of the theorizings and conclusions of the Ballouian period have been exceedingly mischievous as practical elements of our denominational life, we hold it as undeniable that, on the whole, it has helped us and helped the world onward, and that these undesirable speculations, inevitably incident to such a drift-period of thinking, have been more than counterbalanced by the result thus accomplished, - a result, it is perhaps for us to consider, that could have been so widely and thoroughly reached only as attention was arrested, and discussion engendered, and feeling stirred by the extreme putting of this idea in the doctrine of 'no future punishment'. The evil of overstatement is not infrequently thus overruled for the permanent advance of truth."<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, it cannot be doubted that the restorationists worked out the implications of a corrective and consequential punishment as applied to the future life, more rapidly under the stress of controversy than they would



have otherwise done. We have noted how Hudson combined the new and better concept of punishment with the old schema of two fixed classes, a day of judgment, etc. We are not aware that anyone - before 1840 - succeeded in presenting a theory of future punishment purged of all traces of non-ethical ideas of salvation and of punishment. Yet this was the goal towards which a group were moving.

Since, then, the implications of remedial and consequential punishment were being rapidly worked out as to the present life, by one group, and as to the future, by the opponents, is it not entirely reasonable to infer that the laity and the ministry at large, were more rapidly and thoroughly educated in the new idea of punishment, and in its implications here and hereafter, than they would have been by 1840 had there been no controversy?

F. Which side won the victory in the conflict? Up to 1815, at least, Universalists had thought very little about future punishment. When the subject came up, Ballou was their leader, and they took up his views. We have seen from Whittemore's questionnaire of 1829 that by that time the denomination was preponderately on the side of no future punishment, though most were not belligerent about it. By 1840, there had been enough change in sentiment so that the Restorationists were willing to come back with their former brethren. But there was no complete swing to a belief in future punishment during these years, as some recent authors would have us believe. Had such occurred, echoes of rejoicing would be discoverable in the literature of that period. The fact was, that neither side could boast of numbers or victory, at about 1840. The no future punishment group, counting all shades of opinion of that type, probably was still in the ascendancy in numbers, but was losing influence daily. On the other side, the party of

real believers in real future punishment, of any kind, in the denomination, was probably at that time too small to feel elated over its achievements from the whole fight.

#### G. Reflections.

Why did not this controversy settle the question, and bring all Universalists promptly over to the side of ethical and salutary future punishment?

First, because the laity and most of the ministry had not a vital interest in future punishment from the beginning. The reasons are obvious. These people did not want any hell or punishment. They did not wish to hear, or read or think about such unpleasant and orthodox topics, except that they greatly enjoyed deriding all the illogicalities of the orthodox hell. Punishment meant to them arbitrary, harsh, endless physical penalties, on first thought, and they were busily occupied in casting scorn on all such ideas. Freed from the shadow of an endless hell, and seeking to free others, they had no time nor relish for any such idea as that of future punishment.

Again, it must not be forgotten that Ballou's influence was literally the dominating one for many years. His mind and personality were dominant. Ministers who did not agree with him on this or other matters dared not open their mouths in convention to say so, for they could not face him when he would turn on them and start tearing down their weak arguments and distorting their valid ones, and in both of these capacities he had terrifying proficiency. What wonder, then, that the laity as a whole took him as their oracle, since no one could compare with him in strength, vigor and originality of mind, in all the little group then composing the denomination?

Had Ballou's views been different, the views of the group would have been different. Murray and Winchester were long since gone from the stage of action, and their theology was forgotten in the glamour of following the strong and lovable living leader in the warfare with orthodoxy - Ballou.

And, lastly, when the controversy arose, the mechanical ideas of salvation perfectly familiar to every Calvinist made the idea of no future punishment seem much more reasonable to that generation of Universalists, than to the later generations, farther removed from the old Theology.

A second reason for the failure of the controversy to swing the group in general over to the belief in future punishment, lies in the fact that the group was not only disinterested at the outset in the whole matter, but remained so. How little acute interest was felt in the matter has been reflected in many quotations, from within and from without the group. It is proved by the ridiculous smallness of the number of those who seceded. Had the question ever become vital to the Universalists as a whole, in these sectarian days, the cleavage would have gone deeper, and all restorationists would have gotten out from their brethren, or would have been driven out, and perhaps the gulf would have been widened so that they would have stayed separate or joined the Unitarians. The very insignificance of the little split, healed again in ten years, proves that the denomination never became vitally interested in the matter. (Also the fact that Hudson's excellent book never got customers for its first edition) Why?

Again the reasons appear obvious to one who is acquainted with the temper of the group at that time. First, future punishment was not the

central point, but a mere side issue, and a controverted point. Most laymen and laywomen of that day were busy arguing with their friends and neighbors the main point, which was still the denial of endless hell. As long as there were plenty of people in his neighborhood who still stubbornly persisted in their belief in endless hell, the Universalist went on reiterating his texts and his interpretations thereof, and his arguments, all aimed to destroy hell and all its works. This task would absorb the religious energies of the average lay person, and he would leave indifferently aside the minor question of future punishment, unless he should come into frequent contact with some not controversialist, in which case he might possibly get interested in the matter. That ministers did not regard future punishment discussions as more than minor issues, is evidenced by the fact that the debates which went on for years, in both east and west, always and invariably deal with the larger and main issue, that of endless hell, and the Universalist participants held to that issue, and would not be diverted. Ballou never regarded future punishment, one way or the other, as a major issue, nor did anybody else, down to the humblest layman, except the little group of seceders.

And, further, if Parsons Cooke is right, Universalists were so well accustomed to changing their grounds that they could waver back and forth on this matter of future punishment in their own minds, for years, and not be inconvenienced in the least by half a dozen changes of views during that period. Their emotions were safely and happily centered on the polemic against endless punishment.

If a minister did what Ballou largely did - preach present punishment vigorously, and say almost nothing of the future, it provided a very

satisfying pulpit ministry for people who were not keenly aware of sins, nor at all desirous of being stirred emotionally. As we have discovered, this preaching pictured the wretches in jails, reformat ories, etc., as the wicked, getting their punishment in this world. Hence the hearer in the house of worship could easily come to consider himself a very righteous man, if his life were comfortable and satisfactory on the whole. Why should the ordinary Universalist take a hand in this uproar that some were making for future punishment, when he could go to church and hear nothing of any future retribution, and continue comfortable here, in peace and righteousness, with every expectation of continuing in equal, nay, greater, happiness hereafter?

#### H. Summary.

We may conclude, that the state of mind among the Universalists about 1840 was approximately as follows:

1. Some of them say that absolute no future punishment was not easily tenable - was subject to too strong and telling criticism, was likely to alienate many people whom they would otherwise win into their ranks.

2. Most of them thoroughly disliked the flavor of future punishment and had no desire to see any doctrine allowing it added to their simple, rational faith, so delightful to hold, so full of the spirit of love, instead of the spirit of punishment.

3. Being thus largely at sea, they did not wish to have the controversy perpetuated, or reheated. They needed peace and quiet for the formulation of something positive on which they should eventually be able to agree.

4. Probably the attacks from within and without the denomination, on the mechanical theory of salvation as it was expressed in the doctrine of no future punishment drove them faster towards acceptance of ethical patterns for connecting their various relationships to God. They must have been

made sensitive by this criticism to anything sounding mechanical, and must have guarded their speech even before they really changed their private opinions as to salvation and as to punishment.

On the whole, this period of controversy may be generally characterized as the period in which remedial and consequential conceptions of punishment were circulated and very generally accepted, though in 1840 the majority of Universalists were not ready to accept the natural implications of these conceptions in their bearing on future punishment.



## III

## TREND OF IDEAS ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT, 1840-1925

The beliefs of Universalists on the matter of future punishment passed through no further crises. Hence, the subsequent history of those beliefs is the tracing of slow developments, and equally slow disintegrations. The period of time is so long, that it will be wise to break it into sections of convenient length, though the divisions be purely arbitrary, rather than to present each trend in long and empty separateness from contemporary thoughts.

## CHAPTER I

## Future Punishment Ideas in the Period from 1840 to 1850

## Section A. The Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

We are not surprised in pursuing our investigation to discover that Hosea Ballou held to the end of his life the theory which he had developed. In the Universalist Quarterly for January, 1845, he has an article entitled "The Effect of our Present Conduct on our Future State", in which he uses first an old and then a newer argument for his theory.

"As we are now entirely free from all authority but analogy, we have just as wide a field in which to range as we please to make it. We will then take the assumption, that virtue in this state is to be rewarded in the next, and that vice here is to be punished there, for granted, and then reason from analogy. This will bring us to the conclusion, that retribution will forever be one state of man's existence in arrears, and if men suffer for sin in this present state, or here enjoy in consequence of virtue, both this sin and this virtue belonged to a former state. Again, our analogical reasoning brings us to the wise conclusion, that as we have here no recollection of having existed a former state, we shall, in the future world, have no recollection of this. Keeping to our analogy, we may be satisfied that in the future world some will die in infancy, some in youth, some in middle age, and some in old age; all will sin and come short in duty; some will be more virtuous than others; the

most virtuous will endure great afflictions, be persecuted by bigots, and, in short, all things were will analogically agree with all things here."<sup>1</sup>

"Did God design the crucifixion of Jesus, and design that the enemies of Jesus should do this act, and did he design all this for good? Reason, now having got into the divine light, answers in the affirmative. Now suppose, that in the eternal, immortal state, it should please the Father of the spirits of a l flesh, to open this whole plan to the clear vision of all concerned in it, what does reason say will be the effect on those who were the enemies of Jesus? Will such a discovery, if such be ever made, cause those who crucified the Son of God to hide their faces with shame, and forever to lament the deed? or will it cause them to be sensible of their entire dependence on God, and to be wholly swallowed up in the bright glory of divine wisdom, and the ocean of God's mercy?"<sup>2</sup>

"But it is time to draw to a conclusion. But first let us take one general survey of the whole subject. Does Christianity teach us that all men, who have sinned and come short of the glory of God, will be, on account of sin, less happy in the immortal state, than they would have been if sin had never existed? Here we have the whole subject before us. If we answer the question in the affirmative, we impeach both the wisdom and goodness of God. If we answer the question, as we ought, in the negative, we, necessarily, repudiate the belief that sin committed in this mortal state will lessen the enjoyment of the immortal."<sup>3</sup>

In July of the same year Ballou wrote for the magazine another article entitled "Relation of our present Character to the Future", which was drawn out by a passage in the works of Dr. Channing, which is quoted at the beginning of the article as follows: "If we are to live again, let us settle it as a sure fact, that we shall carry with us our present minds, such as we now make them; that we shall reap good or ill according to their improvement or corruption; and, of consequence, that every act, which affects the character, will reach in its influence beyond the grave, and have a bearing on our future weal or woe."<sup>4</sup> Ballou proceeds to reply that we shall carry with us our present minds and also to deny that we shall reap good or ill according to their improvement or corruption.

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1. p. 46

2. pp. 48, 50

3. pp. 50-51

4. Channing's Works, Vol. IV, p. 161

In the Universalist Quarterly for October, 1846, Ballou presents us again with a long article, entitled "Death and its Agencies", in which he says

"We do not need to dwell on some 'strange and unknown principle at death; but we do need to remember the effective grace of God, how he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and leadeth the blind in a way they know not of. Here is the inebriate; reckless folly for years has marked his course, and he is awfully debased; the tenderest sympathies seem all dead, and he appears, to use a theologian's figure, 'half bruth and half devil.' But now, -suddenly as the flash of a gun or the wink of an eye,- a tone, a look, arrests his whole being,- he is held as by an irresistible power, and he is changed,-contrary to all expectancy, and even against the prophecies of the most hopeful. A glorious fabric rises from the human ruins, and the light of a noble intellect beams upon it. Audubon, in speaking of the Zensaida dove, mentions a pirate, who assured him that it was the soft and melancholy voice of the dove that awoke long slumbering feelings in his breast, and brought him to virtue's path away from deeds of violence and blood. Men have been lifted to godlike heights of virtue, and been pulled down by deceit practiced upon a mere appetite; but do we not all look forward to a 'solemn pause which shall come, at death, to the strife of 'fleshy lusts', that 'war against the soul'?"

Ballou concludes that death and its agents teach us "to anticipate a mighty change consequent on the separation from a weak, corruptible, and ignoble body, preparatory to the high worship of God, by perpetual progress in the divine life."<sup>2</sup>

Another advocate of no future punishment is the Rev. Sylvanus Cobb. In the Universalist Miscellany for October, 1843, he writes his "Reflections on the Future State", in which he says:

"We shall be like Christ, for we shall see him as he is....And since we are to see him as he is, and, of course, are to know him whom we have not seen on earth, we shall of course know those whose intercourse we have here enjoyed. And O! how thrilling will be that joy, as we shall congratulate each other on the deathless shores of immortality; when we shall be like Christ, both by being fashioned like unto his glorious body, and by receiving the impress of his moral image, from seeing him as he is. Then will temptations no more trouble the children of God, nor sin poison the soul. Then will false friendship-no-more-pain-the-confiding-heart, nor separation-tear the bosoms

1. 407, 408

2. p. 408

of friends. Then will Jesus see of the travail of his soul and satisfied, life evermore shall reign, and God shall be all in all."<sup>1</sup>

A third advocate of no future punishment is W. E. Manley. His article on "The present Inequalities of Life Consistent with a Present Retribution" in the Universalist Quarterly, for October, 1847, concludes as follows:

"Finally, on the inequalities of this life, it may be safely affirmed, that, if our system fails to explain them, it will be in vain to seek for a satisfactory explanation from the opposing theory. I know it is said that the irregularities of this world are to be adjusted in eternity; but on examining the grounds of this belief, and the manner in which it is affirmed the adjustments will take place, we are constrained to confess that the subject is involved in incomparably greater embarrassment and difficulties. There are two things worthy of being noticed here. First, the common ground for expecting the alleged adjustment is wholly fallacious. The reason why God will adjust these matters in the future, is, it is said, that he does not adjust them now! It is maintained that all the good and ill that checker life belong to the system of retribution, and that because there is now an inequality that does not accord with human merit, in other words, because strict justice is not now done, it will be hereafter.

A little thought, it is believed, will convince anyone that this reasoning, so far from being favorable to the idea of a future adjustment, is directly opposed to such an expectation. If the good and evil of this life are meted out with an uneven balance, a greater inequality will exist hereafter."<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. E. E. Guild was another believer in no future punishment, who must have had, on account of his work, great influence. In 1844 the first edition was published of his work entitled, "The Universalist's Book of Reference". The call for it was so great after that edition was exhausted, that a second edition was published in 1853 in revised and improved form. Our quotations are from still another printing in 1861.

The fourth chapter of this work is entitled, "Bible Doctrine of Rewards and Punishment". The first section is made up entirely of scripture

1. p. 138

2. p. 345

passages in great number which are in the nature of "promises to the obedient". The second section is made up in like manner of "threatenings to the disobedient" all scripture passages. The third section is, "Instances recorded in the Bible of Divine punishment inflicted on the wicked in this life." The fourth section is entitled "Remarks on Rewards and Punishments". We outline this section as follows:

"The theory of rewards and punishments, which has most extensively prevailed in the world, is this: that this world is a state of probation or trial, where mankind are forming characters for eternity. That there is no such thing as retributive justice in this world; but that the reward of virtue, and punishment of vice, are reserved to be administered in a future state of existence. In opposition to this theory we urge the following objections:

1. It renders the reward of virtue, and the punishment of vice, extremely uncertain....

2. If this theory be admitted to be true, it renders it absolutely certain that some virtuous actions will never be rewarded, and that some vicious acts will never be punished.....

3. It destroys all distinction between the effects of good and evil in this world.....

4. It supposes that causes may exist, and be in operation in this world, without producing any effect whatever.....

5. It is contrary to analogy.....

6. It is of exceedingly pernicious moral tendency.....

7. It is contrary to human observations.....

8. It is contrary to human experience.....

9. It is contrary to the plain declarations of the word of God.

10. It comes in contact with facts which are plainly and explicitly stated in the Bible.....

Such are our objections to the doctrine of retribution in another world for deeds performed in this life. We will now take the following positions. Mankind are rewarded and punished in this life. This position we sustain by the following arguments.

1. From the justice of God. God's justice is active....
2. From the nature of God's moral government.....
3. From the history of mankind.....
4. From the observation and experience of mankind.....
5. From the direct and positive testimony of the Bible.....
6. From facts which are clearly stated in the Bible.....

We will now notice the objections to the doctrine of retribution in this life. It is objected:

1. 'that the pious and virtuous are frequently unfortunate, and sometimes miserable, in this world.' This is undoubtedly true; but, we ask, are the virtuous miserable and unfortunate because they are virtuous? In other words, do they suffer the penalty of God's moral law? This will not be pretended. But if they do not, then their miseries must be attributed to some other cause.....

2. It is objected, 'that the wicked are frequently prosperous and happy in this life'. That the wicked may be prosperous and happy, in one sense, is undoubtedly true. That is, it may be true of the merely immoral man. But that they are ever prosperous and happy in the sense that the virtuous are, or in the highest sense of those terms, we deny.

3. Another objection is, 'The theory of retribution in this life is of bad moral tendency....Now, it appears to us that it must be obvious to every man of sense, that the preaching of rewards and punishments which are absolutely certain and sure, will exert a more powerful influence on man, than the preaching of rewards and punishments which are uncertain, even although the latter may be much greater than the former. Is the doctrine of present rewards and punishments, then, of bad moral tendency?.....

4. It has been objected that 'this is the same doctrine that was held by the ancient Sadducees.' We know the Sadducees believed in the doctrine of present rewards and punishments. In this we agree with them. But they also held that death was the last end of man. From this we dissent....

5. It is said 'that there is no mercy in this system of rewards and punishments. No mercy in it! Is it so, then, that God cannot be just, and at the same time be merciful?.....He can be both just and merciful at the same time.,.....

6. But it is also said 'there is no grace in this system'. 'Mankind' it is said, 'according to this system, are punished all they deserve; and,



therefore, there is no room for the exercise of grace'. Indeed! But are not these rewards and punishments limited? And is there not room enough for the exercise of grace after the dispensation of rewards and punishments had ceased?..

7. It is objected that 'this theory gives no rational account of what, or in what, the punishment of sin consists!.... The nature of the punishment of sin depends altogether upon the nature of the sin committed. If it is a neglect of the physical laws, then it is a deprivation of the enjoyment which flows from the exercise of the physical powers. If a violation of these laws, it is the physical pain and misery which is the necessary consequence. If it is a neglect of the intellectual laws, it is a deprivation of the pleasure derived from the exercise of these faculties; and, besides, the individual must be deplorably ignorant, and, in point of intellect, sink to a level with the brute creation. If a violation of these laws, it is mental uneasiness and unhappiness, frequently terminating in partial derangement, or positive insanity. If it is a neglect of the moral laws, it is a deprivation of the happiness which results from the exercise of the moral powers. If a violation of these laws, it is the misery and unhappiness which follow necessarily....

8. Another objection is that 'According to this theory, much of the punishment, which is experienced by the guilty, consists in remorse of conscience.' 'Now', it is said, 'it is well known that by a long-continued course of sin, conscience may become completely paralyzed and inactive, so that it ceases to reproach or sting the transgressor.' Whether the conscience can ever become entirely dormant and inactive is very doubtful....It must be recollected that if there is such a thing as remorse of conscience, there is such a thing as the pleasure derived from a conscience 'void of offense'. Conscience not only condemns us for our faults, but it approves us for our virtues. In proportion therefore, as an individual becomes insensible to remorse of conscience, in that same proportion he becomes insensible to its approving smiles. Now, does he gain anything by this?.....No, As the inward monitor speaks not to approve, so its warning voice speaks but feebly. In that case, the individual becomes more reckless and daring; less circumspect and cautious, and more bold in his crimes. Of course he is more easily detected, and more exposed to the penalties which are annexed to the laws and institutions which have been established by man.....

9. It may be objected that, 'as a part of the punishment of sin consists in remorse of conscience, and since as, according to Phrenology, some men have a large share of conscience, and others only a small degree, therefore, those who deserve the least punishment will receive the most, and those who deserve the most will receive the least'.....

10. It may be asked, 'How does the self-murderer get his punishment?'.. Those who commit the act of suicide under the influence of insanity, are not responsible; hence, incur no guilt, and, consequently, no punishment. But, allowing some do commit this act in the exercise of their reason, what then? The whole difficulty in the mind of the objector may arise from a false view which he entertains respecting the object and mode of divine punishment. If

you suppose divine punishment to be retaliatory, - that is, that a certain quantum of pain is inflicted on the transgressor,....all this is a very great mistake. No, God punishes to reform and make better. His punishments are disciplinary, emendatory, and salutary....Of the suicide, then, it may be said, that, by a course of sin and transgression, he has plunged himself into misery, until God uses his own hand as the instrument of his own destruction. He is cut off from life and all its endearments, and his career of wickedness has terminated in untimely death....

11. But the objector may say, 'Suppose a man to murder a fellowbeing, and the next moment turn round and kill himself? How is he punished for this double crime, committed in the very last moment of his life? We frankly confess that this is, to all appearance, one of the greatest difficulties, in the way of our theory, which can possibly be stated. We admit it to be a very plausible objection. But, supposing that no satisfactory reply can be made to it? What then? Let it be borne in mind that this objection is founded on an extreme case. How many of the human family are guilty of this crime? Not one to an hundred thousand....But we are not afraid to meet this objection in the very face. To murder a human being, and then for the murderer to turn round and kill himself, is an unnatural crime. Charity would lead us to suppose that no man would be guilty of such an act without extraordinary provocation. The man who could commit such a deed must be under the influence of the most powerful animal excitement....Now, is it not a well-known fact that some men have not that government and control of their passions that others have? And should not these be mitigating circumstances in the case of persons guilty of killing a human being and themselves at the same time?....We do not ask, how will those persons be looked on by the eyes of men; but we ask, how will they be looked on by the eye of that God who 'sees not as man sees', who is acquainted with all the thoughts of his creatures, their motives and intentions? He also is acquainted with our frailty, our liability to err, the circumstances in which we may be placed, and all the influences with which we may be surrounded....The heart must be callous indeed, and insensible to the feelings of humanity, which will prompt its possessor to look on the agonies and sufferings of the suicide which had been the cause of his raising the hand of destruction upon himself, or upon the miseries endured by that man whose passions are so violent and ungovernable as that he can commit such a crime as the one we are considering, and then say, 'It is not enough!'

Such, readers, are the arguments in favor of the doctrine of present rewards and punishments. And such are the objections against it. We now appeal to your candor, and ask, which of the two theories we have had under consideration is most consistent with reason, with common sense, and the Bible? It is of the utmost importance that you should decide this question. If you decide in favor of the theory which we have advocated, you are safe. Sin will have for you no charms, and temptation no power. You will avoid sin as you would avoid the jaws of death, or the poisonous fangs of the serpent; and you will cling to virtue as your only, your chiefest, and your greatest good."1

1. pp. 84-103

### Section B. Mediating Positions during this Period.

Various positions were taken by those who would not accept future punishment, and yet could not defend the straight no future punishment position towards which all their sympathies inclined.

The first example is the Rev. Ebenezer Fisher, writing in the Universalist Quarterly, April, 1848, on "Memory and Conscience in the Future State". He lays down as his presupposition "that the power and the use of memory must go with the soul as a part of its immortality; as one of the conditions of a consciousness of immortality". The theory which he questions he first states as follows:

"It is a matter of universal belief, that, in the future state, we shall have vast accessions of knowledge, and an immense increase of spiritual and moral insight. The spirit, in that pure, clear atmosphere, sees the true color of all acts and thoughts.... Here memory brings all the foul misdeeds of earthly life - Untruth, Impurity, Injustice, Hatred, Impatience - and flings them down at the feet of the self-accusing spirit; it lifts them, one by one, and lays each on its own downcast brow; while the undying memory binds it there, a shame and a torture forever. A brow of midnight and a soul of shame, amid Heaven's glory and praise. This is Hell; - the Hell of conscience; interminable, ever deepening, like a volcano, shaking deeper the more it burns - forever... God does not punish the sinner: he leaves him to himself...."

"Can this pure light of heaven shine upon the soul, revealing its deformities as they are daguerrotyped by memory, without causing the most piercing shame? Must not each angry word, each hateful thought, each insidious intent, each purulent imagining, nauseate the taste of the instructed conscience?"

"The answer is as follows: "We have in the apostle an illustrious instance of the effect of memory and moral light... Paul had repented and is not to be classed with contumacious sinners. True, he repented, but he did not thereby lose his memory of the past. We are discussing the effect of a great moral light in connection with a memory of past sin. Our argument applies only to those minds where light is felt, and where conscience and memory abide; no others can be called in question under this theory.... But we must pursue this question of repentance a little farther. Repentance is sincere sorrow for sin, and implies the forsaking of sin. But has it not been made abundantly apparent that the theory we are discussing assumes sorrow for sin as its vital point? We think beyond all dispute that it has, - that sorrow produced by the pure

light that convicts the soul, is a guarantee that sin will be forsaken. What more will its advocates have? But perhaps it is thought we, in our turn, by speaking of the sorrow of repentance, have yielded a great point in debate. We have not. We questioned the idea of a long enduring struggle in the soul produced by the light of truth and the shadow of memory....

The atmosphere around our souls is not clear; all the mists and magical enchantments of earth envelope us. Let these break away, let Christ appear, let the light of God's ineffable glory stream like sunlight through the soul; and as the captive child who has heard of a father amid the wild faces that surround him in a barbarous land, thrills at home with the first vision of a father's face, so let the soul released behold with enraptured eye the beatific vision of the Eternal Truth, and 'believe, and live'.<sup>71</sup>

Jerome Harris, in The Future Life, published in Portland in 1849 says, in his conclusion:

"It is admitted, I believe, by all, that when an individual enters upon the Future Life, his spiritual eyes are opened to see the enormity of sin, and the exceeding glory of holiness, and that the moral light which radiates from the throne of the Eternal, will pour upon him in such overwhelming floods, as to preclude the possibility of his mistaking the right, and the nature of it. Justice, and mercy, and truth and power will stand before the soul, blended in perfect harmony; and many say, it will be overwhelmed by the sense of the perfections of the Divine character and of its own guilt and condemnation. In this state it will feel the keenest anguish. It must know then, what will positively minister to its happiness or misery; and if it is left to choose freely between them we know that it will as certainly choose the good, as we know that a sane man will not put his hand willingly into the fire, or drink deadly poison.....And if he does choose the right and pursue it, if there is any truth in the Bible, his former iniquity shall be blotted out of God's book, and be remembered no more against him. And to say, that the remembrance of sin, which has been repented of and forgiven, brings misery to the soul, is what our entire experience contradicts. That the individual will be inclined to follow the dictates of truth and righteousness, is evident from the fact that flesh and blood will not go into the immortal world. The body, with all its passions, senses and desires, will go and mingle with the dust from whence it came; and as nearly all unrighteous desires, and temptations to gross wickedness, come to the mind through the agency of the body, - its senses and appetites - the soul will be delivered from most of its anticelements to evil when it passes the bounds of death. For example, the man addicted to the sin of intemperance will not in the Future Life have a thirst for the intoxicating bowl. Then, the curse of that sin will not be found there. Neither money nor the need of it will be there, so that the great multitude of evils, of which the love of it is the cause, will not exist there.

The same may be said of all that variety of sins, which spring from the desires passions and imperfections of man's carnal nature. The soul, disencumbered from all these, and clothed upon with its spiritual body, is prepared to go on to perfection. That it will do so, must be evident to all who consider what was the object of Christ's mission into the world, and what were the principles which lay at the foundation of his doctrine, and the motives and impulses of all his actions."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Samuel P. Skinner, writing in the Universalist Miscellany for September, 1843, gives, in his article on "Punishment and Forgiveness" a clear statement that punishment follows inevitably upon the sinning, and yet carefully avoids any statement as to future punishment. He says:

"Now no one will question that these different effects which attend upon us, as we worthily or unworthily employ our powers, are the result of an established and universal law of our nature,—a law ordained by God; and that the design in causing these separate effects to attend upon our conduct, is, on the one hand, to incite us to a right use of our powers; and on the other, to guard against their continued abuse. The proper use of powers is what I understand by virtue. The abuse of them is what I understand by vice. By the pleasures which attend upon the former, I understand the rewards of virtue. By the miseries consequent upon the latter, I understand the punishment of sin. Now these being, respectively, the invariable results of our conduct; and being, moreover, results which follow from the established laws of God,—are they not just as much divine rewards and divine punishments, as if they resulted from his special agency, instead of his general laws? They are, clearly so. The plant that buds and blossoms in the ordinary course of vegetation, is no less dependent on the divine agency than Aaron's rod, which budded, and blossomed in an hour. Such, then, is the nature of punishment,—conjoined inseparably with the transgression.

How much better would it be for society...if this view of rewards and punishments could be generally exhibited in the pulpit, instead of putting off the consequences of our conduct to the dim and far-off future; and then clothe them with such improbabilities as to make the denunciations of Christianity against sin inefficient and inoperative with most minds. The great and sole aim of the Christian pulpit should be to produce in man an abhorrence of vice and a love of virtue; and this it can never accomplish until it dwells with more energy upon the immediate consequences of our conduct."<sup>2</sup>

In the Universalist Quarterly for July, 1847, there appears an article entitled "Restoration" which begins the long half-century fight against the word and its implication. It is signed "A. M." which means, probably,

1. pp. 275-277

2. pp. 73, 74



Alonso Ames Miner.

The article begins with a quotation from Mark, 4:26-29. "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." The article continues as follows:

"It seems plain that our Savior intended in these words, to illustrate the gradual and imperceptible growth of his religion in the heart of man. Seed cast into the earth does not vegetate and come to maturity in a moment. It requires time, favorable influences, and suitable culture, to bring it to perfection....

Nothing could be more absurd than the notion that a man is, all at once, by a sudden and mysterious influence, made perfect in Christian knowledge and righteousness. As well might we expect to see the whole process of vegetation, from the first sprouting of the seed in the earth to the full corn ripened in the ear, accomplished in a moment....

And the natural growth of everything gives an increase of power, beauty and excellence; thus showing that onward is the order of nature, and that progression is written upon everything....

The succeeding stage of existence, it may be well to remark, is never inferior, but always superior to the first. The blade rising from the seed shows a state of advancement; the ear formed upon the stalk develops something still more excellent, and exhibits a higher stage of progression; The caterpillar marks a great advancement from the egg out of which it springs; and the chrysalis is a mere state of preparation, from which the same creature at length arises to the perfection of life, and exhibits all its glories and beauties. Nothing goes backward in passing from one state of existence to another.

It has been supposed that the first man of our race was created immortal, and perfect in holiness and happiness; but that he became mortal, corrupt and miserable, by reason of sin. And as a consequence resulting from this strange supposition, it has been thought that the salvation promised in the gospel will be a restoration, or a replacing of man in his original state, though in another world. This view of the subject, the reader must perceive, entirely reverses the order of things, and represents, if we may refer again to the figure used by our Lord, that 'the full corn in the ear' is first



produced; and afterward the ear appears, then the blade comes,- and then by a backward movement the process is carried up from the simple blade until the full corn is produced again as in the beginning!....

But the Scriptures plainly show us that our condition in the resurrection, so far from being a state of restoration, will in fact be a state of the highest advancement. And instead of looking backward and expecting to be restored to a former estate, we should look forward to the time when man shall have advanced to his high and holy destiny as the child of God! Jesus has assured us that the subjects of the resurrection shall be equal unto the angels. Man will attain this equality with pure and spiritual existences in heaven, not by a retrograde movement, but according to the laws of progress, in passing from that inferior state of existence in which he was created, into the higher, holy and heavenly life brought to light through the gospel!....

We are well satisfied that the notion of a final restoration of man is altogether without foundation in truth. But we rejoice that in the great order of progression which God has established in his works, the vast race of humanity, who here bear the weak and corruptible nature of Adam, will be made alive in the resurrection-state, in the spiritual, glorious and heavenly nature of Jesus Christ!

We do not fear that any man in passing from the present into the future state of existence, will fall back into a worse condition than that in which we now live. The future state will be a state of advancement; and, what is true even of the insect, that develops new powers and beauties in passing through its successive stages of being, is alike true in regard to man. In the present state of existence man is sinful, suffering and mortal; in the future state he will be pure and holy, as the angels in heaven, and will be alike immortal and the child of God, being the subject of the resurrection. And although we know nothing of the times and the season which the Father hath put in his own power, and pretend not to determine when all the purposes of Divine Wisdom and Benevolence shall be accomplished, we devoutly bless the name of the Lord that we are permitted to believe without a doubt that the time will come when every man shall truly and joyfully say, 'In the Lord have I righteousness and strength'. 1

We have four recorded utterances of the Rev. Otis A. Skinner on the matter of future punishment during this decade, which seem to show a progress in his own thought. The first is found in "A Series of Sermons" which he preached during the winter of 1841-1842 and published in 1842. He says:

"The circumstance that some men are peculiarly abandoned and unworthy, is no argument against their salvation; for many of the saints now

in the kingdom of grace were once poor, blind, depraved, and degraded. God, in his scheme of mercy, reached down the hand of compassion, and lifted them from their miserable condition, to the high and holy privileges which they now enjoy. He caused the light of truth to irradiate their darkened minds; he made the waters of grace cleanse their polluted souls, and he warmed their cold hearts by an exhibition of his infinite and everlasting love. He saved them by his grace; he did for them according to the riches of his goodness...

We maintain, therefore, that those who die in sin will be saved by grace, just as sinners here are saved. God can show mercy in one state of being as well as in another. The same grace which can here redeem the defiled and besotted, can redeem those who die in this condition. It will be of no avail to say, the latter have no merit; for they have the same merit which Saul of Tarsus had, which Simon the Leper had, which the thief upon the cross had. I know it is thought there is a great difficulty here—one which we cannot surmount. I am frank to say, to my mind there is no difficulty whatever. Were merit essential to salvation, there would be difficulty; but since salvation is of grace; since without grace there is salvation for no human being, there is no more difficulty in proving the salvation of all men than of one man; for the same principle which works out the salvation of one, can work out the salvation of all....The free gift is as extensive as the condemnation; and as all were condemned, the free gift will come upon all. The free gift does not, as many suppose, simply place man in a salvable state, or relieve him from the curse of the fall; it produces salvation, or, as the apostle expresses it—justification of life."<sup>1</sup>

In 1847, during the winter months, the Rev. E. F. Hatfield preached against Universalism in New York City, and was answered by the Rev. Otis A. Skinner in seven sermons. These are published. On one he says as follows: "In cherishing this belief, they were authorized by the language of Paul, who in describing the resurrection, breaks forth into the following rapturous song of triumph: 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' The word here rendered grave is hades, and the text clearly shows, that by the resurrection all will be raised from hades to a state of incorruptibility and immortality - where they will be equal unto the angels, and die no more forever!"<sup>2</sup>.

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In the next sermon he refers to the foregoing in the following

1. pp. 124-127
2. p. 108

words: "We saw in our last lecture that in the resurrection all men will be incorruptible, immortal and glorious,- that there will be no gulf-no separation-no torment in that blessed state."<sup>1</sup>

At the very same time the Rev. Otis A. Skinner sent in to the Universalist Miscellany an article entitled, "How Can He be Saved who Dies in Sin?" in which he answers the doctrine that probation ends with this life, in the following manner:

"Again,-this theory assumes that the soul cannot be changed after death. But why not? There is nothing in the nature of the soul which prevents it. What is it which here renders conversion so difficult? Is it anything more than the unfavorable circumstances under which sinners are placed? Is it not because their appetites have obtained the mastery over them? and is it not because their evil companions hold them in their snares? Death will destroy these appetites. Those who are impelled on in the career of sin by evil influences will be free from their dominion by death. Death, too, will remove them from the company of those like themselves, besotted and degraded. We hear, I know a great deal said about our being drunkards and extortioners and revilers in eternity. You might just as well say we shall be farmers, and mechanics and merchants. That which originates with the flesh will cease with the flesh. I do not say the mind may not be stained by its connection with the body. Neither do I say it will not be dwarfed and stunted from the accursed influence to which it has been subjected. But I do say, and he that knows anything of human nature, knows that I am right, that the mind can no more be enslaved by earthly appetites and passions, and chained by them to sin as it is here, after death, than the lips can give utterance to the thoughts after they are cold in death."

1. p. 145 (The popular title of this volume is Skinner's Review of Hatfield)

"Why, then, may not the soul be changed after death? What law is there of which we have any knowledge, that can prevent it? Jesus can have access to it there the same as here- and an access unobstructed by the earthly influences which here arm it against him. Spirit can communicate with spirit, in one world as well as another. God will be the same to the soul in the next world that he is in this - the same paternal, gracious, merciful, forgiving God, for he changes not. Jesus will be kind, loving, tender and forgiving, there as here; for he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The soul will be there the same free and voluntary agent that it is here; for if God were to take away its power of choice and progress, it would cease to be criminal for its love of evil. Here then is the way in which those who die in sin can be saved; we can therefore do more than hope for them, we can believe in their final subjection."<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1848, Mr. Skinner had in the Miscellany an article entitled "The Nature and Duration of Punishment", in which he argued that punishment is corrective in its nature and hence limited in duration, and makes no mention of future punishment, either to affirm or to deny. In the years since/Otis 1842 Skinner has ceased to insist on no future punishment. If he still believes it, it is in a moderated form, and he prefers not to deal with the subject at all.

#### Section C. Belief in Future Punishment during the Period.

In "The Memoir of the Reverend H. B. Soule" by Caroline A. Soule we have a very definite statement of belief in future punishment. It is embodied in an article from the pen of Mr. Soule entitled "Punishment of Murderous Suicides."

"I believe in punishment beyond the grave; not in a place of outward torture....I cannot believe our infinite Father will do a work, which for very hideousness the devil would blush to own! - I believe that in that world which is free from temptation, and where every element of its condition is highly favorable to the virtue and holiness of the soul, justice and grace, truth and love, and the power of the gospel kingdom, will do their sacred work infinitely more perfectly upon the man who dies in his sin, than they have done it upon the man whom they have turned to righteousness here, amidst these continual scenes of temptation. And hence it is, because I see God and Christ on the side of truth and right, laboring in all worlds, to wash the universe from the last stain of sin, to sweep into oblivion the last vestige

1. Miscellany for January, 1847, pp. 277-279

of wrong, and promised on the pages of their glorious revelation, that with so glad a heart, I look forward to that blissful era when all souls will be restored to holiness, and become denizens of the everlasting kingdom of the One Father.

On this ground there can be no greater mistake than the supposition that the sinful man can leap into heaven in five minutes. There can be no heaven to the soul, till the soul itself is right and holy. It is likeness to God, it is the being filled with the love of Christ that constitutes the chief elements of heaven. Heaven is not simply a place, a vast temple, thundering with a great jubilee of golden harps and clapping of hands; but it is purity of spirit, love, truth, goodness, sweet filial obedience, the conscious favoring presence of God, and the dear fellowship of the holy Christ.

But to return finally to the question of punishment in the case before us, I remark, that if the murderous suicide does not receive the full, just and effective penalty of his crimes here, he may receive it hereafter; and do so, too, without at all conflicting with the truth of our religion. For, as I have already shown, in the early part of this discourse, it is the doctrine of revelation that sin shall be punished according to the degree of its demerit. I cannot say precisely how it will be inflicted there; I do not know that; I have not fathomed all the mysteries of the infinite Father. I only know that it will be inflicted, and will moreover be administered on the strict principles of justice and mercy. I frankly confess that I am not so intimately acquainted with all the details of future punishment, and especially the modes of its infliction, as my orthodox friends profess to be. I have not studied the anatomy of torture. I do not even understand all the ways in which God punishes his erring creatures here; but He graciously stoops down from heaven and tells me that He is wise, and good, and just, and merciful, and will therefore do only that which is right and best in both time and eternity. Hence whatever punishment the supposed suicide may still justly deserve; whatever punishment he may still need, will, in the way the good God sees will be best, be administered upon him. But he will be obedient at last; for God is never thwarted in His final purposes.<sup>1</sup>

A good champion for future punishment appears in July, 1845, in the pages of the Universalist Quarterly: W. A. Fernald. His article is entitled "Effect of our Present Character on our Future State". He not only takes time to present his own theory, but refutes as he goes along all of the popular theories and arguments for no future punishment. Let us examine his long article as briefly as may be.

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1. pp. 257-258

His main principles are

"First, that spiritual growth is the measure of spiritual enjoyment; second, that knowledge and virtue are acquired gradually. We suppose it can hardly be necessary to attempt a proof that these are principles recognized in the scriptures; they are known and read of all men.

But before we apply them, it is important to understand precisely what is the character of the work we propose to do with them. Be it known, then, that we do not propose to prove rewards and punishments in a future state of being, for certain individual actions, or sins, committed here. Our subject is, the effect of our present character, not conduct, on our future state. For, be it observed, every individual sin may here be justly punished, and yet, in the future, we may be losers on account of a sinful life. Indeed, here is a grand distinction, which sheds light on the whole subject. We are punished and rewarded in two ways, - for each individual act, and for a general state of moral character. This last principle will hold good forever; for, in truth, moral and intellectual character is always the measure of enjoyment.

But, while it is universally acknowledged that, all through his life, spiritual growth is the measure of spiritual enjoyment, we are reminded by some that we cannot connect, in this manner, the two states of the present and future existence, without adopting the principle of analogy, which, in reference to such a matter, is altogether imaginary, and unworthy of trust. And many have made themselves merry in exposing, as they thought, the consequences of a course of analogical reasoning, with reference to the future state...

But, why reject analogy altogether? It seems to us that it may furnish, at least, some very probably ground of reasoning. The ground which we assume, and to which we shall confine ourselves, in the present article, is this: That what takes place, now, in obedience to certain laws of the Creator and of nature, which appear to us unchangeable, we may rationally suppose will always take place, the same circumstances with reference to those laws being observed. For instance, it is a law, now, that virtue produces enjoyment. Is this law eternal and unchangeable? Then it will always be so. By the same law, if virtue ceases, or if it diminishes, so will enjoyment. Again; it is a law, now, that knowledge and virtue are acquired gradually; or, in other words, that the mind does not spring at once to its full stature, any more than does the body. It may make some sudden and surprising advancements, but it is sufficient for our purpose to say, that it does not jump instantaneously from the lowest states of ignorance and depravity to the highest states of knowledge and virtue. In general, the process is exceedingly slow....Indeed, we all instantly recognize it as a law of nature, as unbending as fate, that knowledge and virtue cannot be thrust into a man, or made to expand in him, passively, as you would pour water into a receiver. or excite heat in a body of iron.....

.....

There is another way in which our argument may be evaded. One may



say, that, in perfect consistency with the continued operation of this law of spiritual growth, by the continual increase of knowledge and virtue, the mind may, by a different change of circumstances in the future state, by the deliverance there experienced from the bondage of the flesh, by unobstructed powers, by the new scene of heavenly reality and glory which will there burst suddenly upon it,—one may say that, by these means, the mind may make more improvement there, in the time of one day, than it could here in a lifetime of seventy years. So it may; but then all will have this advantage, and reason assures us that the farthest advanced at the commencement of that state, will not be equalled by those who commence at the same time with powers unexpanded. Can any rational man suppose that an infant, a day old, will be equal to a Newton in the future state, should both die at the same moment? that the very moment of death will equalize them, intellectually and morally? To be sure, the infant may be brought to maturity very speedily; may even, in course of time, outstrip the Newton, in moral and intellectual attainments. But that is not the point. Will they be equal at death? will they commence the future state equal? Now, one may trace the processes of growth and expansion as far into the future world as he may believe himself justified, and with whatever degrees of advancement and retardation with different individuals he may please to imagine; and he may indulge in that speculation, too, perfectly independently of any argument, or any representation of ours. But just let him remember what belongs to imagination, and what to argument.

.....

But we may not represent the views of all. Some there are who hold that this work is not done at the moment of death, but who incline to suppose an unconscious state between death and the resurrection. Well, where nothing is done, nothing is done. The absurdity strikes us as forcibly, to have this wonder accomplished in the same way precisely, but only after waiting a while — a lapse of nonentity — as to work it without having that nothing intervene. The thing itself is not in the least affected by the interposition of a mere blank.

.....

We talk of death as though it was the grand settler of all theological difficulties, the grand revolutionary point in God's government, and in all the laws and operations of the whole empire of the human mind. And that it is a great change, no one disputes. That marvelous scenes will be opened to us at that moment, and wonderful advances made from that point with the whole race of man, may be all very compatible with revelation and reason. But that God will annul, at that moment, any law of his spiritual creation, and not suffer things to go on the eternal and established order which so harmonizes with all our ideas of Deity, is altogether a different proposition.

.....

But, says one, Do you mean to deny that a miracle can be performed, of the nature we are considering? No, it is not for me to say what God can

do and what he cannot do. And all we have said of the impossibility of thrusting knowledge and virtue into a man, or causing it to expand within him, passively, has been said in connection with the supposed continued operation of a natural law. We say, it is a law of our nature that this cannot be done. What miracle God may perform, one may guess as well as another. Let it be remembered, however, that it deserves no better name than guessing, when applied to a future state.

We now say, in conclusion, that our argument, if true, is not a piece of mere useless speculation. It is of a highly practical character. If you convince men that, at a certain time in their mortal existence, say at the age of twenty-one, they will be equal, in all points, to the highest minds of earth, whether they exert themselves or not, do you think they would be so likely to exert themselves for that attainment, as though they were made to believe it depended on their own efforts?....

Now, apply this to the future world. The fact is, this doctrine of equality absolutely denies that man does, or can, with his efforts, attain to that height in knowledge and virtue, which he shall be raised to at death or some time afterwards, by miracle, in a passive manner. The contrary doctrine asserts that he shall attain to it if he strives for it; but this asserts that he shall not, even if he does. Now, will he be so likely to strive for so high a condition? I say no. His aims will be lower, and his views of his own nature less noble, as a progressive creature, of never-failing, self-acting, unobstructed powers.....

Nor let it be said, that we set aside the grace of God, and make all dependent on human efforts- that we make salvation come of works. For, it is by the grace of God we have existence; it is by his grace we have reason, conscience, and the better affections; it is by his grace that we are furnished with the means of improvement; and it is by his grace that we are provided with a Savior, and that we are saved. But does his grace operate alone? In all, or nearly all those passages where salvation is spoken of, as of grace and not of works, it is spoken of also as effected by moral agents.

Truth now comes to me, and says,--Man immortal! you are to progress by your own individual powers without cessation and without interruption, gaining only as you exert yourself, and with the aids you receive from without, through the spiritual ages of eternity! I say, this is the highest possible idea of human existence; and since men are always moved most by what appears to them of the most importance, this must be the strongest possible motive to the moral and intellectual nature.

But before we close our subject, it may be expected that we answer the question - if this is all true, and invested with so much importance why had God not revealed it? In the first place, I answer, to my mind he has revealed it; but for the reasons aforesaid, I have chosen here to

present but the rationale of the matter. In the next place, I answer: Is nothing true and morally important which is not revealed? The truths of the sciences, especially of mental science, are of moral advantage. Let it not be said here, that the Scriptures contain all that is morally useful to man. For this will annihilate the importance of all natural theology, moral philosophy, and of the whole world of science, which so unveils the Creator through his works, and lifts man up in more ardent gratitude and attachment to his throne. The true statement of the case is, that where nothing else is manifested to the mind, the scriptures are a sufficient guide to holiness. But he who is able to read, devoutly and with intellectual eye, God's 'elder scriptures', or to place his feet upon the rock of human reason, and from thence draw truth like an electric power, from the moral heavens, has achieved a victory over the impediments and obstructions of knowledge in this world, which the verbal scriptures of God's truth do not always, and were not in every case intended, to give. But let us remember, that if the doctrine of inequality in a future state, on account of our character here, is not revealed in the scriptures, surely the doctrine of equality is not. Let us have 'thus saith the Lord' for a doctrine so peculiar. Show me the scripture statement that all shall be equal the moment they die, or at any time afterwards. If you cannot do this, will you object to my showing by reason that all will not be equal? Neither scripture nor reason, we may say, asserts that all will be equal; suppose, then, that unsophisticated reason, based on principles purely scriptural, loudly and vigorously asserts the contrary. Shall I not bow to it? I will."

The Rev. Darius Forbes, in a polemical work, entitled "The Universalist's Assistant" says, in regard to future punishment:

"I cannot regard this as a state, where men are neither rewarded nor punished, and the next one where there is nothing but rewards and punishments. As for this state, it is not so, if the Bible is true, or any reliance is placed upon human observation and experience; and surely it will be difficult to make out, from the scriptures or otherwise, that the future is purely and solely a state of rewards and punishments, for human doings in this world. I have been accustomed to think, and certainly the most obvious appearance upon the face of the Scriptures, and the actual state of things as presented to human experience and observation, confirm the impression, - that this state of existence is quite as much a condition of discipline as of trial; for most assuredly, men are in some degree at least, if not fully, rewarded and punished here for their doings. And in regard to a future state, it may well be asked, if it is entirely a state of retribution upon the present, how and when are men to be rewarded and punished for their doings in that state? for I suppose they will be active beings there, and well as here....

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The true state of the case, I take to be, that every state in which  
(1. pp. 251-291

the human soul will ever exist, is a state of retribution, both on the present and the past, if past there is. An intimate relation subsists between the present and all the past. By our present, we make our future; and our future will be a retribution upon our past, no matter whether we are in this world or that which is to come; and at the same time, it will be, in a very important sense, a retribution upon that present. In other words, our doings and their consequences go hand in hand, and at the same time reach back, and take hold of the past, as a cause, and forward, and take hold of the future in their consequences."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. L. C. Todd writes the leading article for the Universalist

Miscellany of October, 1846, on the subject "All Future Conditions Much Dependent on the Improvement of those which Precede Them" as follows: "Much is written to show the evil effects of a vicious life to be confined and limited to this body. I have many years been satisfied that this is an error, and an error, too, of such magnitude as to paralyze, to a great extent, the success and energy of Christian reform. Nevertheless, I find the idea urged in every form of argument, as if it were an essential doctrine of Christ. I have never been able to perceive the least real weight in any such argument.

Christianity was instituted to teach a future and onward existence of man, and to be a system of moral means for the training, discipline, and development of the higher faculties. It connects the present and the future by an unbroken and indissoluble Bond, and thus closes up that awful hiatus which death exhibits to view; and embraces and unfolds to the mind the strongest possible motives to moral and Christian efforts. That the efforts and improvements of this life will be of no use to us after natural death, is assumed by many; but I can by no means concede this to be the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. To my mind, they teach clearly a connection between the character and condition of the soul, both before and after natural death; that death has no power to affect the moral character or condition of the mind whatever. On this point let us reason for the present."

Todd follows with more of refutation of the various arguments of the no future punishment group than positive statements of his own belief. At the end of the articles we find the following note in small type:

"There will, no doubt, be a difference of opinion among the readers of the Miscellany with respect to the sentiments advanced in the foregoing communication. It is well for Christians, however, to 'prove all things', and see to it that they 'hold fast that only which is good'".<sup>2</sup>

Another writer enters the scene with a similar point of view: -

1. Universalist Assistant, 3d ed. 1847, pp. 81-84
2. pp. 125-132

Rev. M. Sanford. His articles are both entitled "The New Testament Doctrine of the Resurrection". The first part appeared in The Universalist Miscellany for December, 1846, the leading article of the issue, and the second in the Miscellany for January, 1847. In the first article Sanford asks what the resurrection is, or is not. He says it is not a transmigration of souls, and it is not a resurrection of the body, and:

"It is not a new creation; Here I come in contact with some, I am sorry to say, among Universalists. I allude to those who, in their apparent haste to get rid of the consequences generally claimed as resulting from the admission of the immortality of the soul, have run into what I regard as the opposite extreme, and denied that man has a soul at all, more than the brute. They are, if I understand them, positive materialists, contending that man's mind is the creature or result of material organization, and that when his body dies, every mental faculty within him perishes at once and forever, and from that time he has no more existence than as if he had never been. But still they do not deny to man the hope of a future existence; they tell us that he is destined to a new and higher life. But how is he to have it? Through the continuance and development, in a higher state, of powers now existing in his nature? Through the continued existence and enlargement of his present intellectual and moral faculties? No; these, they argue, all perish forever at the hour of mortal dissolution, but his existence will be resumed by the gift of a new organization. God will go work at making again; he will construct a new machine, the old one having gone to utter ruin, - give it the power of running, and of running right, forever, - put it in motion, and then pronounce the world redeemed! This is what they call the resurrection.....I object to the theory, first, because it virtually denies the reality of a resurrection. A resurrection is the continuance, - nay, the exaltation, of what already exists.....

Secondly, I object to this theory on the ground of its being opposed to a great and fundamental law in nature. I refer to the fact, observable in all God's works, that everything he has made has, at the moment of its creation, though in an embryo or undeveloped state, all the powers, or at least germs of powers, which it ever manifests, or which are necessary to answer the entire purposes of its existence....

Thirdly, I object to the above theory, because the scriptures most clearly teach that the resurrection, in raising man to immortality, continues the existence of powers or faculties which are possessed by him in the present life....

At least, then, a portion of the nature now possessed by man, if we are to receive this testimony, is to survive the grave, and be clothed

with immortal, imperishable vestments. What portion is this? We have seen that it is not his body, his material form. That is unworthy of a resurrection; it was designed only for his covering and instrument during his residence in the present world. What portion is it, then? A voice within us, gives the answer; it is the intellectual and moral part of our nature."<sup>1</sup>

In the second article, he answers the question as to when the resurrection takes place and what its consequences are. As to when it takes place, he feels that it is more reasonable and scriptural to suppose that it takes place immediately. As to its effect on men, he says: "1. It will exalt them above the dominion of death. 2. It will free them from a connection with their animal appetites and propensities. In the present life, man has not only an intellectual and moral nature, but an earthly, animal one, which, whilst it admirably fits him for a tenant of the present world, is the source of his most powerful impulses and temptations to vice and crime....

This fact, that the present animal appetites and propensities are not to be carried into the future world and immortalized, has been relied upon by some as proof, that all men will be perfectly and completely holy and happy immediately after death; but this I regard as a hasty conclusion, founded upon ignorance of the laws of our mental constitution. It savors of that kind of medical quackery which would identify the getting rid of an active disease with the restoration of the patient to perfect health. To make man holy and happy, it is not sufficient to throw off his connection with his animal nature. A negative will not produce a positive. What if, during his connection with this animal nature, he intellectual and moral powers, which alone are to survive the grave, have been misapplied, perverted and degraded? And what if he dies in a state of ignorance and sin, - unacquainted with duty and God, - in rebellion against the moral laws of the universe, and with a low, diseased, vicious character! Will his passage through the grave transform and purify him? ....I cannot believe it. It would confound all moral distinctions, and set at odds all ideas of divine justice.....I will respect the motives of those among us who are contending that there is no moral connection between the present life and the future, as long as I have evidence of their honesty; but I cannot rid myself of the conviction that this doctrine is a modern device which has neither reason nor revelation on its side. It is very possible, that texts of scripture can be so construed, as to make them appear to require a belief in the doctrine, that the present life sustains no moral relations to the future, and that moral character does not extend beyond the deathbed; but a textual or literal interpretation of Scriptures is one thing, while a rational interpretation is another; and I believe the latter mode of interpreting the New Testament will afford ample materials for the conclusion, that there is no moral chemistry in the grave, and that the soul, in leaving this life, in a state of debasement and guilt needs something more than a change of its residence or its separation from a material body, to invest it with the robes of immaculate



purity and ineffable bliss....3. It will introduce them into a scene more favorable to their attainment of purity and perfection, and to their enjoyment of peace and happiness. More favorable, I say, to the attainment of purity and the enjoyment of happiness. I do not say, - I do not believe, that the resurrection, itself, will create and bestow these treasures upon them, without any exertion of will and faculty, on their part. These treasures are not of a kind, that they can be made and put on, like a suit of clothes. It appears to have been imagined, indeed that the resurrection will have power to create and weave them into the very texture of their being. But if we have rightly apprehended the nature and office of the resurrection, it has no such agency. It has no creative power whatever; it neither creates man physically, nor morally. It only lifts man to a higher life, and leaves the work of regeneration and perfection in other hands, to other agencies. I submit to every believer in the religion of the New Testament, that is Jesus Christ, through the influence of truth on the heart, who is the Savior of man, not the chemistry of the grave, or a material resurrection, through a physical transformation! 'By grace are ye saved through faith.' This is the only condition of salvation, which is known in the gospel. Whether here, or hereafter, the soul can be cleansed from its pollutions, and brought to a state of moral purity and perfection, only through the influence of moral truth, an influence which shall not only call its powers into healthy activity, but give them a healthy and harmonious development. And when it leaves the present theatre of its existence in a state of disease, wickedness and moral death, will it not be afforded the needed means of its reformation, purification and perfection? In its new, higher and enlarged sphere, will not the light of truth shine with greater splendor? Will not the character of God and the glory of Christ appear in greater fullness? And will not the soul itself enjoy a larger freedom, and have an increased capacity for moral obedience and spiritual growth? All that we know of God from his works, within and around us, together with the whole tenor of Christianity, conspire in answering in the affirmative. Hence I conclude that the future life will be an improvement upon the present, and that in it all souls will be carried forward to higher and higher degrees of knowledge, purity and blessedness, through the measureless periods of their eternal career."<sup>1</sup>

Again, a writer signing himself M. B. (probably Moses Ballou)

publishes in The Universalist Quarterly for July, 1847, an article on "The Resurrection", in which he states his own views as follows:

"Let it be particularly observed here, that during this whole period of the Divine economy, previous to the establishment of Christ's administration, no attempt had been made by divine power, to do man's work for him, but simply to induce him to do it for himself. And the same principle was adopted by Christ, when the work of moral control was assigned to him. His

government has now been in visible operation for nearly two thousand years. During this whole time, so far as we have any information, no exertion of power had been made by him to change miraculously the moral character of men, or to create for them, wholly without their cooperation, a higher moral condition internally. A great variety of means and influences, however, have been put into operation enabling them to attain this condition by their own voluntary activity.

This work is said to be God's and Christ's, evidently in a sense similar to that in which a business would be called mine, though carried on by agents that performed the labor, with means and facilities which I had furnished for that purpose....

Briefly, then, in the order of things I have sketched, men live out their days, and leave the world in a greater or less degree of moral imperfection. The period of their primary instruction and discipline is now past. God transfers them to a higher school, because his purposes are not yet accomplished, Christ's mission is not yet ended. The period of his government is not over at death; for the objects of that government have not then been realized. The gracious plans of his and our heavenly Father must be fully carried out; and these contemplate nothing less than the voluntary subjection of all souls to Him; their attainment of his spiritual likeness of purity and love; or, as the Scriptures express it, their coming to 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'. Hence a moral anastasis after death becomes necessary; a rising up of the soul to the glory of its true destiny. The principle feature of this process is purely moral. Men are to become by it, 'children of God', i.e. in their character, being 'children of the resurrection.' It will be physical only in this sense, viz. God will give the soul, after death, a new body adapted to a spiritual existence, according to the testimony of Paul already referred to. This old mortal body, having accomplished its purpose, will be left to mingle with its mineral elements, and go to make up other forms of vegetable and animal life. The soul, freed from it, and invested with its new tenement, which the apostle terms 'its house of God, not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens', will continue, as at present, under the administration of Jesus Christ. There, as we trust, it will be subject to higher and holier influences than surrounded it here. Its temptations and trials may be also far less. New light and knowledge will be communicated by the Saviour, and under his guidance, instruction and discipline, it will finally attain to its true greatness; its moral glory and grandeur will be fully realized; his mission with it as Redeemer and Saviour, having attained its object, will terminate; his government over it will be resigned to the Father, and God to that soul will be all in all.

This entire process, to which every soul of man in the universe must be subject, which completes and winds up the mediatorial work of Jesus; a process extending over an indefinite period of time; which takes each and every soul at death and raises them to moral perfection and glory; this is

the true anastasis of the gospels."<sup>1</sup>

One of the best minds among the Universalists was Hosea Ballou II, who was during the time of the controversy considered a leader in the future punishment party. In the Universalist Quarterly for 1845, he writes on "The Seared Conscience", ending thus;

"Talk as much as we please of the conscience becoming so callous, so thoroughly indurated, that it ceases to act in any way, or to give pain to the transgressor; there never was such a case, and there never can be one. True, it may be so abused as to be perverted, and lose its finer susceptibility just as the natural functions of the body may be impaired by disease or excess; but, in both cases, the palsy of the more delicate sense is followed by evils aggravated in proportion to the injury that is done. The unperverted conscience, or moral nature,.....when it is first violated, may be likened to a fresh wound, that smart, because the parts are yet in their healthful state, and that gives warning even of the approach of injury; but after it has been long abused, it becomes like a dead sore, gangrened, scarcely sensible to a slight pressure, but throbbing with a dull, incessant pain, infecting every bone, muscle and nerve, and corrupting the very springs of life. Then, the whole body is sick, and the whole heart faint. Who does not know that the latter case is comparably worse than the first?

The view we have taken of the subject is demanded, not only by the particular facts, to which we have referred, but, also by the general principle, that the laws of our nature cannot be thwarted with impunity. We need not show that it clears away some of the difficulties which people have felt in admitting a righteous moral government of the world, under the present administration of divine Providence."<sup>2</sup>

This is ~~evidently~~ a stubborn argument for present punishment, with no reference in the article to the question of future punishment.

In the same magazine in the issue of April, 1847, Hosea Ballou II writes on the analogy between the present state and the future, and seems to have gained some ground in the two years, for he says:

"If our reasoning, however, be correct, there must be an intimate and vital connection between the two states; the present communicating morals as well as intellectual elements to the future, to be there modified under

1. pp. 262-264

2. pp. 99

new influences. To sum up the whole in a few words, - there are two sets of agencies, which, from the nature of the case, we must recognize in the future; one of them, the same essentially as at present, namely, the inherent powers and qualities of the individual's own being, such as it has become; the other, different, namely, the new circumstances and influences that will bear on those properties. We say, these two sets of agencies; but, then, both of them must work under the same immutable principles of the divine government that operate here."

#### Section D. Western Universalist Ideas on Future Punishment

during this Period.

We shall first turn our attention to a volume published in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1845, entitled "A Debate on Universalism, held in Warsaw, Kentucky, May, 1844, between Rev. E. M. Pingree, pastor of the First Universalist Society, Louisville, Kentucky, and the Rev. John L. Waller, A. M. pastor of Glen's Creek Baptist Church, Woodford County, Kentucky."

In Mr. Pingree's first speech, he says:

"God is not mutable; he changes not....Though he may punish us for our sins; (and he does so, for the Scriptures say we are judged, rewarded, or punished, according to our works;) yet he punishes in kindness. Being unchangeable, and forever the same, even if he should punish us in the future life, his punishment would be directed by love and goodness towards us, inflicted in the spirit of a Father. Though our punishment should last for thousands and millions of years, it would be for our benefit, 'our profit', unless God changes at our death."

But, again, later on in the course of the debate, he revealed his own views under pressure, - the pressure usually brought to bear in those days upon a Universalist in debate, (as we have revealed). He then says as follows:

"The gentleman wants to introduce new points into this discussion. The doctrine of no future punishment is one. We may speak of that by and by. He defines that to be Universalism. It is not Universalism, exclusively. Many hold it. I do not myself believe in future misery. Of that we shall speak by and by; but not yet. We want first to show that great and glorious and central truth of the Bible, the ultimate holiness and salvation of all

men. Whether punishment is confined to this, or extends into the future world, is not the question. I shall not be drawn away from the true question by all Mr. Waller's efforts in that direction. He is welcome to all the advantage he can gain by discussing such questions now; and may have all the impression, and make all the use he pleases of them. He may have what triumph he imagines himself to have gained and may keep it for the rest of his life. We shall see."<sup>1</sup>

A careful study of the remainder of the debate does not show that Mr. Pingree ever got back to the question of future misery.

The Rev. Erasmus Manford, another Western Universalist, with much talent for writing, engaged in a theological discussion with the Rev. E. Kingsbury, a Presbyterian. Their discussion was conducted with the pen, the two writers having letters published in "Manford's Magazine". The discussion was published separately by Manford in 1847. From this volume we quote Manford's words:

"Grace is to abound more than sin....All mankind sin; and in order for grace to abound more than sin, all must receive grace unto life.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so, might grace reign, through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord"

Sin has produced spiritual death, universally; grace will confer eternal life, universally, through the Saviour of the world.

There is, is taught universal deliverance from condemnation, sin and death, and the universal reign of righteousness, grace and eternal life. Dr. Clark, commenting on these verses, says in conclusion:

"Thus we find, that the salvation from sin here, is as extensive as the guilt and contamination of sin; death is conquered; hell disappointed; the Devil confounded; and sin totally destroyed! Amen! Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Amen, and Amen!"<sup>2</sup>

This is the phraseology of the believers in no future punishment, and we are safe in assuming that Manford had no interest or belief in future punishment, at this time.

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1. pp. 73

2. pp. 54-5

A little volume of sermons entitled, "Evangelical Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical; by various western ministers of the 'Restitution'" was published in 1847 by the Rev. R. Thornton, at Ann Arbor, Michigan, who was himself one of the contributors. In most of the sermons the subject of future punishment is not touched at all. But we find that Thornton himself and another minister, the Rev. A. H. Curtis, while not specific in their statements, are undoubtedly at heart believers in no future punishment. Mr. Curtis says:

"It is manifest, however, that every one shall receive the full recompense of his deeds, whether they be good or evil; and that future salvation is given, irrespective of the reward of righteousness or punishment of sin. Hence, it must be in all respects a work of grace, and the subject of thanksgiving and praise to God, world without end."1

Thornton says:

"From the premises that the dead shall be raised, and all changed in a moment at a particular time, the conclusion follows that there is but one resurrection of the dead in which all classes and conditions, nations and generations will be included.....

In what does this change consist?.....(1) Physically, in putting on a celestial, incorruptible, immortal body, - a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It will be of God - a divine spiritual body, unchangeable and incorruptible in its nature, incapable of mutilation and suffering. It can never be racked with pain,....This body will have the vigor of eternal youth. Weariness, disease, and old age, can never be known to it....It will shine as the sun, and be bright as the light, and glistening, exceeding white as snow, and be capable of exercising all its powers and faculties without intermission, and yet without weariness... It will be a spiritual body, and not subject to any of the wants, temptations, and infirmities of the flesh.....

(2) Morally, this change will consist in being perfectly assimilated to God - in being filled with the fulness of his ineffable glory, and absorbed in the ocean of his infinite love. If such a great moral change is not actually expressed in the words of our text, it is at least clear from the testimony of the Sacred Volume that such a moral renovation must precede the resurrection, for all who are in this glorious state are 'equal unto the angels' of God in heaven; and are 'the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.'....All who are the children of the resurrection are the Children of God. They are equal unto the angels; as pure and holy as the celestial spirits which surround his throne.



'No cloud these blissful regions know,  
Forever bright and fair,-  
For sin the source of all our woe  
Can never enter there.'

There sin and pollution; there wrath, anger, hatred and revenge, with all the guilty passions, and unholy desires which render life a cruel bitter, will be known no more. There no jarring affection is ever felt, no malevolent wish is ever uttered, nor discordant voice ever heard. There no ill friend vents forth his hatred and malice, and no brow is darkened by the malignant passions of rage and revenge; but benevolence and benignity beam from every countenance, and unite heart to heart, and soul to soul in one indissoluble union....

How shall this change be effected?....

The moral condition to which this change will bring us,- from sin to holiness, from hatred to love, from sorrow to joy, and from earth to heaven, will be effected through the ministry and teachings of Jesus Christ our Lord....

No; Death cannot save us! it cannot accomplish that work for which Christ came, and suffered, and died; but which his gospel, in too many instances, fails to perform in this life. Men or angels cannot save, neither is there any other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, than Jesus of Nazareth....

There is no heart so hard but that his love can make it melt; there is no conscience so seared but that his spirit can make it feel; there is no sinner so dead but that his word can quicken to life; nor is there any soul so depraved but that it can respond to active goodness, and kindly with its holy breathings. In the most depraved, the sacred fire has not become utterly quenched; there is still a spark which the Saviour may love, may seek, may find, may wash, may sanctify and save. He is able to bow the hearts of all in willing submission, and wrap their souls in the holy flames of sacred devotion....

(From an occasional sermon.)

Concerning rewards and punishments, we believe in their absolute certainty, finite degree, remedial design, and limited duration.

We believe that every person shall inevitably be rewarded, without failure, for every good deed, and punished for every evil deed he performs, without the possibility of escape.

We believe that actions are good or evil as they tend to promote or diminish the general happiness of mankind; and that the merit or demerit

of every action is proportionate to the happiness or misery it produces.

We believe that rewards are designed to strengthen and confirm us in well doing, and punishments are inflicted to prevent crime, reform the offender, and turn him from his evil ways.

We believe God will continue to punish the disobedient and refractory till all shall repent and turn to him, and every individual son and daughter of Adam be made intimately holy, and consequently happy."<sup>1</sup>

There seems to have been one real Restorationist minister only, during this whole period, in the west. He was the Rev. Daniel Parker, pastor of the First Restorationist Church, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Between 1841 and 1844, he wrote two series of letters for the press, which were published in the latter year in book form - under the title, "Familiar Letters to a Brother; in Two Series; on the Final Restoration of all Mankind to Holiness and Happiness; through a righteous judgment, and an equitable retribution." The volume is dedicated to the church of which he was pastor, concerning which church he says:

"It should also be remembered, that this little church is the only one of the kind, known by the writer, to exist in the Mississippi Valley, as the little cloud, seen by Elijah's servant, 'like a man's hand' I Kings 18:44 rising in the WEST: (the Mediterranean Sea, out of which it arose, lies west of Mt. Carmel, from which the little cloud was seen)".

The last letter of the series takes up the difference between Restorationists and Universalists - in the following words:

"Dear Brother: I know not whether my brother is fully aware of the difference between Restorationism and what is now called Universalism, because the latter term was formerly used to designate the Restoration doctrine; hence arises much confusion in the minds of those unacquainted with the history of this matter. I will therefore briefly state in this letter, why the designation was changed. All were formerly called Universalists who denied endless misery, and held that all the human race would ultimately be made holy and happy: but with this they also believed in a judgment after the resurrection, to be followed by limited suffering to those who should die unregenerated; repentance for, and forgiveness of sin, and the new birth  
1. pp. 68-78, 109-110

were held sacred. Such was the prevailing theory of ancient Universalists. But of late a sect has arisen, taking the same name, but denying in part, the former doctrine. They hold that all sin and suffering are confined to this mode of existence; that the judgment is now in progress; that every transgression is immediately followed by its appropriate retribution in this life, and that the general resurrection will place the whole race of Adam on grounds of perfect equality. This sentiment is predicated upon the supposition that the corporeal, and not the intellectual part of man, is the sinner; and that when the body is dead, the sin is ended, with all its consequences. When this doctrine was introduced, it spread in a short time, with great rapidity, and is at this time much more popular than ancient Universalism, with those who are willing to risk present consequences for present indulgence. The adherents of the ancient faith believed this a dangerous error, and not willing to be identified with it, assumed the appellation of Restorationists, leaving to the dissenters the name, while they held on to the principles of their predecessors."1

Mr. Parker does not evince any knowledge that the schism was healed three years before this time, in Massachusetts. Probably he and his church pursued an independent course unto their respective deaths, in the midst of what was probably belligerent, exultantly antinomian Universalist preaching, (of which little, in the nature of the case, has been preserved in print.) Mr. Parker's beliefs are widely sundered at many points from the opinions of most Universalists of that time. They undoubtedly give some light on the Restorationist views of the Massachusetts groups, on whose views we have no direct testimony. Mr. Parker writes thus: -

"The writer has no expectation that every reader will arrive at his conclusions; nor does he think the salvation, either of himself or others, depends upon the adoption of his doctrinal views; but that 'repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ' with obedience to his commands, will insure to all who comply with these terms, an exemption from condemnation in this life and in the life to come.

On what principle then, we shall again be asked, will Eternal Life be enjoyed? The reply is, on the principle of a gift; no one deserving it on the ground of works, 'lest any man should boast'.

Will every one then receive a full reward in this life and all be  
 1. pp. 137-138

equally happy at the general resurrection? - Restorationists say not! They believe that those who live and die in sin, will rise to condemnation; that the degree of condemnation and suffering will be proportionate to the degree of guilt in each individual; that the Eternal state does not immediately supervene. But that the Resurrection, Judgment, and Retribution, though they will take place in a future state, it is not properly the eternal one, but belongs to that kingdom which will be exhibited when Christ comes the second time, or last dispensation of times: that before this kingdom will be given up to the Father, all will stand 'before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in the body', then, a righteous retribution will be awarded to each class. The present is therefore, the state of probation, and the time of the Saviour's second advent, will be the season of retribution. The two terms probation and retribution are by no means synonymous; the former signifying a state of trial, and the latter, that of rewards in reference to the manner of our using that state of trial.

For want of seeing this difference, some suppose that Restorationists hold to a second probation. They do hold, however, that where creatures are so circumstanced that they cannot know the truth in this life, it will be communicated to them in another; but there is no guilt without wilful transgression.

.....

If then it can be made apparent, that the Resurrection, Judgment and Retribution, are all to take place before the kingdom is given up to the Father; we shall be able to see how all the terrible threatenings of God, against the impenitent, may be executed through the administration of the Son, during his reign as Mediator, without including the dreadful idea of perpetual never-ending misery.

.....

So the misery which the wicked will suffer, will only be a just retribution for their past sins, and constitutes no claim on God for deliverance, which when effected, will be on the principle of Grace, and not of debt.

Restorationists believe that some will die the second death, but do not think it will be endless misery. They suppose it will consist of extreme suffering in future, arising from a consciousness of guilt contracted in this life; yet, as the last enemy is to be destroyed, which is Death, and the second death being later than the first; it must be the last enemy.

.....

On this principle, and in this view of the subject, we can see the force of that declaration recorded in Heb. 10:31 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' That is, in an unprepared state; in that state, where 'the wicked shall cry to the mountains and rocks, to

fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb'.....I believe all this; but think it will take place before the close of time; and under the mediatorial reign, before it is given up to the Father, and no in Eternity; which, according to Isaiah 57:15 is a 'high and holy place.'<sup>1</sup>

#### Section E. Contemporary Surveys of the State of Doctrine of

Future Punishment among Universalists, during the period 1840-50.

We get several very interesting glimpses as to what was going on during this decade, from several contemporary generalizations.

The first to be noted is from the pen of the Rev. D. Forbes, a believer in future punishment. The article is in the issue of the Universalist Miscellany for February, 1844 - and is entitled, "Universalism - What it is not, and what it is." He writes:

"By the term Universalism, I mean the belief that all mankind will become, ultimately, holy, and consequently happy, regardless of the particular theory upon which this is maintained. As I understand the matter, the man who receives this idea as God's truth is a Universalist in theory, whatever may be his views upon other points of doctrine. He may be a Trinitarian or a Unitarian, a Freewillier or a Predestinarian, a believer in future punishment or not, and still he is a Universalist.....

I deem this explanation necessary at the outset, because a strenuous effort has been, and even now is made, to restrict the meaning and application of this term to those who believe that all the consequences of sin are confined to the present mode of being; and that, too, against the earnest protestations of the entire denomination in this country. I believe there is but one feeling in reference to this matter, among the intelligent portion of Universalists, both laity and ministers, in the United States.

We complain of this attempt to restrict the meaning and application of the term in question, on the part of other denominations, because it conveys a false impression as to existing facts, and is most wickedly unjust to the views of the greater portion of our best and most valued ministers, as well as laymen.

.....There never has been a time since the existence of the denomination, when more or less of its members, both clergy and laity, were not believers in future punishment....This every man knows is the fact, who knows anything about the matter.

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1. pp. 7-41 passim

.....

But this is not all.....Most grievous misapprehensions are entertained and propagated as to what the doctrine itself really is.

It is a very common idea that Universalists believe men are to be transferred from this world to heaven, with all their sins upon them, and its deadly canker sores eating deep into their souls.....

Hence we are often edified with the shocking spectacle, of a man first murdering a fellow and then plunging the bloody dagger into his own heart, and so following him to heaven, with his hands all reeking with his own and fellow's blood, and his soul polluted with the guilt of a two-fold murder; of the old world being swept into heaven in all their guilt and wickedness; of the Sodomites going to heaven in a chariot of fire, in all their bestiality, vileness and pollution.

I need not tell any men of common candor and intelligence, that nothing can be more wickedly unjust than such representations; for on no one point have Universalists used more effort to guard the minds of the community against misapprehensions, than upon this. They have declared, over and over again, that they do not believe that men go to heaven, in their sins; that their idea of universal happiness is founded upon that of universal goodness.

.....

Universalists understand salvation to be deliverance from the control of wrong habits and principles; a purifying of the soul from all that is base and vile; a removal of all the guilt and contaminations of sin; a plucking of the soul from that hell of darkness and guilt, in which every one is plunged who gives himself up to sin; and that by being thus renovated and pardoned the soul is exalted to heaven. They mean, too, that whenever and wherever this takes place, whether in this world or the next, the soul enters heaven, or heaven enters the soul.

This is the fact in reference to both classes of Universalists. All the difference, in regard to this matter, between them, is in reference to the manner of attaining this end, or the means by which it is to be effected.

Those who believe the consequences of sin extend beyond this life suppose salvation is to be attained, in all cases, through each individual's own agency, - the voluntary exercise of the powers he possesses, under God's blessings; and in so far as it applies to the present life, those who believe all the consequences of sin are confined to this mode of human existence, fully concur in this view, but do not suppose it will apply to another state. They believe that, at death, or between death and the resurrection, or at the time of the resurrection, all the corruptions and guilt of every human soul will be purged out by some mysterious process, wholly independent



of the will and agency of the individual.

Unphilosophical and absurd as this view may appear to some minds, it is not so very singular after all. Those who entertain this view, only adopt and carry out the common belief of our most orthodox people, in reference to believers; and if one is an unphilosophical proposition, or an absurdity, the other is also.

Those who claim the exclusive title of evangelical, universally maintain, I believe, that all the imperfections and sins that attach to believers at death, will be purged out by some mysterious process, between death and their entrance upon future existence, - a process in which the individual's agency or volitions have no part.

The same process that is supposed to purify believers from their little sins, those who believe all the consequences of sin are confined to the present life, think will purify all souls from the deepest stains of the most aggravated sins. And I must confess, if the consequences of believers' sins are wholly confined to this life, and the contaminations and guilt they fix upon their souls are to be purged out by some process independent of human agency and volitions, I cannot see why it may not be so with all mankind.....

Subh being the views of Universalists, how is it possible for any intelligent man, who has informed himself as he ought, to suppose they believe any man will go to heaven in his sins?"1

Another glimpse into the state of belief comes from a "Biographical Sketch of Rev. Hosea Ballou", by the Rev. Otis A. Skinner, whose own views we have seen to be changing during this period, (for the sketch appears in the issue of the Miscellany for May, 1846). He says:-

"Mr. Ballou maintains that we have no evidence that the consequences of sin extend into the future state....There is now a very large proportion of our ministers who disagree with him in the above-mentioned points. This difference, however, does not lessen their esteem for Mr. Ballou; neither does it lessen his esteem for them."2

A valuable retrospective view of the significance of this decade is here inserted, though its classification of the various beliefs of Universalists holds good for the whole period from 1845 to 1870. A Rev. D. Dorchester published in the Methodist Quarterly Review of July, 1871, an  
 21.pp.4835-9

article entitled, "Doctrinal Phases of Universalism during the Past Century". (Universalists had celebrated their centenary in 1870) Rev. G. W. Whitney, a Universalist clergyman, reviews and discusses it, in the issue of the Universalist Quarterly, for July, 1872, under the same title. We quote:

"Mr. Dorchester's readers are next treated to a description of the 'Restoration Schism', in which the history of that unfortunate and ill-timed sect is drawn out with great candor and fulness. The causes which produced it: the bitterness of feeling which characterized its friends and foes, at the time of its inception; its strenuous efforts for success, and its final death, are all fairly told or shrewdly hinted at....

We now come to the 'third period' of the history of our Church, extending from 1845 to the present time. Our author says: 'We had at first intended to fix upon 1852, the year of Mr. Ballou's death, as the turning point between these two periods, but a closer scrutiny of these years has led us to adopt the earlier date as more nearly marking a transitional stage in the denomination.' We are glad to note this concession, for it shows us that, as with the waters which the prophet saw in the vision, no single mind could measure the divine life in our church at that time. It is asserted that the changes of this period were produced by 'the decline of Mr. Ballou's vigor, and the new currents of modern thought;' but the last reason does not seem to be a true one, for our denomination appears to have been but slightly affected by outside influences. Universalists have always been accused of having great faith in themselves; and very properly, for their efforts have been largely blessed.

We think less stress should have been laid on the decline of Mr. Ballou's vigor, and more importance given to the influence of those in the denomination who were Restorationists before the 'third period' of our denominational history commenced.....

Our author divides the Universalists of this period into three classes, according to their belief concerning the future condition of man. One class following Hosea Ballou, believes that after death 'there is not other sentient state but what is called by the blessed name of life and immortality.' Mr. Dorchester, however, has reasons for believing that even these 'do not now hold this view precisely as Ballou did.' The second class includes those 'who believe in a state of discipline after death for the wicked'; while the third class, agreeing with Mr. Ballou in many particulars, 'Hold that men will enter into the other world with the same moral character that they have here - that therefore some will start in the race of eternal life more advantageously than others, but all progressing upward forever. The consequences of wickedness in this life will be different degrees of inferiority and disadvantage in character and condition in the other world and endless deprivation and loss.'

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He thinks that this class includes a large majority of modern

# Universalists."1

Since Mr. Whitney goes on to other matters without comment, we may assume that he does not disagree in the main with Mr. Dorchester's statements as quoted.

Our next glimpse is very definite and correspondingly valuable. The author is a Universalist minister, engaged in refuting the accusation of one Matthew Hale Smith, who renounced and then denounced Universalism, after some years in its ministry, and who received so much publicity that the Universalists demanded an answer. Toward the close of this work, written in 1847, Mr. Browne abandons a long refutation of the misapprehensions of the public and of Mr. Smith concerning the Universalist ideas on future punishment, and gives us affirmatively the state of opinion as he then knew it or believed it to be.

One class of Universalists believe that the Bible positively teaches that there is no punishment for sin beyond the grave, and quote Romans 5:7 'For he that is dead is freed from sin.' This class embraces, at the present time, but a small portion of the Universalist ministry.

Another class believe that the Bible positively teaches that those who die in sin will be punished, for a limited period, after death. This class, like the last mentioned, embraces, we think, but a small number of the ministry.

A very large majority of the Universalist ministry believe that the Bible teaches that all men will become holy and happy in the resurrection, and that it is silent in regard to the condition of man between death and the resurrection.

Of this large class, probably a majority infer, from the laws of memory, conscience, and analogy, that those who die impenitent will begin the future life in a lower moral position than those who die penitent. Many believe that the former will experience remorse for their sins, and all believe that they will finally become penitent and be restored to holiness and bliss.

All agree in the final holiness and happiness of all men. All  
 pp. 319-321

believe in the reality of present retributions; that there is 'no peace to the wicked,' - that his mind is 'like a trouble sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.' And few, we think are in the habit of drawing motives to obedience and virtue, from the fear of punishment in the future state. The accompanying evils of sin and the attendant joys of piety, they regard as the more efficient suaves to repentance."<sup>1</sup>

Hosea Ballou, II, a scholar of great discernment, gives voice to his realization of the direction in which the current of opinion, and his own opinion with it, as we have noticed, is running, during this period.

He says:

"Our denomination, since its rise in this country, has gone through two noticeable changes of doctrine, and consequently of religious character; for the latter naturally follows the former. There are indications, also, that it has now entered on the third. Its history, therefore, is naturally distinguished into periods corresponding in time....The first of them occurred about the commencement of the present century, when the former doctrines of the trinity, of the vicarious or penal character of Christ's death, and of Antinomianism, began to give way to Unitarian views on these points. The second took place between the years 1817 and 1824, when the tendency which had long been increasing, to confine sin and its consequences to the present life, assumed a more determinate character, and became predominant. The third change, if it prove to be general, may be said to have begun within a few of the last years, when the current of opinion has run more strongly in favor of a moral connection of the present life with the future, and when the sharp outlines of doctrines in general have been softened down, if not sometimes obliterated,- to say nothing of certain movements occasioned by the rationalistic and transcendental tendencies without."

The same Rev. Daniel Dorchester, whose views we have noted, in his volume entitled, "Concessions of 'Liberalists' to Orthodoxy", quotes parts of a letter written by the Rev. J. M. Austin, "one of the fathers in the Universalist Ministry", and published in "The Universalist" for January 28, 1878, in which he says:

"At one time, I repeat, this Ballou theory was sanctioned by quite a large portion of our denomination....

The Christian Ambassador was the first Universalist journal that ever boldly and plainly advocated the doctrine of Future Discipline. When I first took the paper in charge, (in 1851) the majority of, or all, the  
1. Hosea Ballou II; Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America, Universalist Quarterly, January 1848, p. 80

other denominational periodicals, were managed and edited by brethren holding substantially what was then, and is now, called the Ballou theory. I may be mistaken somewhat in this assertion; but I think not. The Christian Messenger (the predecessor of the Ambassador), while owned and published by Philo Price, or by Messrs. Halleck and Lyon, and briefly at one time being under the editorial control of the Rev. Dr. Wm. S. Balch, may have alluded to or spoken approvingly of the theory of Future Discipline. But if so, it has escaped my memory, for I have no recollection of it. But this I think I can truthfully state: That the 'Trumpet' the leading Universalist journal of that era, owned and edited by the Rev. Dr. Whittemore; the 'Banner', of Augusta, Maine, under the ownership and editorial control of the Rev. W. A. Drew; and the Star in the West, of Cincinnati, Ohio, of which the Rev. J. A. Gurley was proprietor and editor, were outspoken advocates of Father Ballou's doctrine of no punishment subsequent to the death of the body. Indeed it was strongly advocated in those days, by leading and eminent Universalist defenders; and so deeply were the ideas imbedded in the public thought in general, that Universalism taught nothing more or less than that salvation was promised and given immediately at death, to the most wicked and depraved among the children of men, that it remains in many minds to this day."<sup>1</sup>

#### Section F. The Significance of this Period.

This is, obviously, a period of great significance. In this decade following the close of the controversy, new trends of thought arose, and won attention and interest. It was a highly constructive decade.

1. As to when the new tendencies appeared, practically all testimony, as cited, points to the middle years of this decade as the years in which the new trends were recognized. Recalling that the heat of controversy had died down by 1834 or 1835, after which time no bad names were exchanged, we may feel sure that the trend away from belief in no future punishment had been long under way. It was not noticed till during this decade, however,

2. All agree, who sum up the beliefs of this period, and our citations prove, that there was observable a tendency to insist on the moral connection of this life with the next.

3. It is equally clear that there is continuing belief in no future punishment, on the old grounds. There is some difference of opinion as to how much of this there was, proportionately, in this decade.

4. It is also evidenced sufficiently, that there was some Restorationist conviction, both east and west. We have quoted from the western Restorationist. The existence of others, in the east, is clear from the summaries above, though we have no word from them in print.

5. We have seen, and some of those who attempt to sum up also recognized, some moderations of the no future punishment doctrine, and they are urgently and confidently advanced by their creators.

6. Reflecting on these facts, we are inclined to ask certain questions.

First - what is the nature of these moderated views, which soften down the bold outlines of the no future punishment teaching?

They are views which lay stress on the change from one state to the other, as tremendously powerful in its effect on the souls of even the most hardened sinners. Underlying this argument, there is much of the material and literal concept of heaven, of God, and of the future life in general. Starting with the concept of a beautiful, radiant and harmonious heaven, these men argued the effect of such an environment on the soul. They had no hell, so all must go to heaven. Yet they had no desire to put the shadow of sorrow, pain, punishment, or anything else unpleasant into their loved picture of heaven. They solved the dilemma of the bad man's death by insisting that he would be changed almost at once, by the loss of the old temptations, and the entrance into the new environment, into a fit



citizen of heaven.

Second - what is the nature of the so-called future punishment views held by some during this period?

They are not really belief in punishment, obviously. They are varying statements of the moral continuity of this life with the next, and of progress in that life, entering it at the point of moral and spiritual development at which death finds us. The advocates of these views allow that the separation from the body may be very stimulating to the higher nature, as also the entrance into a more spiritual, pure and helpful environment, but their primary stress is on the inner and spiritual qualifications and conditions, rather than on the change from the earthly equipment and environment. To these men, the most important factor in the death change is what a man is, to the mediators of the no future punishment views, the important factor is what environment the man gets into by means of the death change.

It is the opinion of the author that this group of thinkers would have been nearly as opposed to real punishment, even though limited, in the future, as their brethren in the no future punishment camp and on its outskirts.

Third - what were the theological antecedents of the men who are now in the so-called future punishment group? Are they Restorationists who have compromised? Or no future punishment men who have taken a longer stride away from their former faith than some others? Or young men who were not identified with either of the two old parties? Or men who never took a decisive stand on the matter before this time, even if in the ministry?

None of the names of these men coincide with names of known members of the Restorationist sect, or its sympathizers, (and Eddy gives a full list of them) Hence, they are not compromising Restorationists. Once a Restorationist, always a Restorationist, appears to be the rule.

Hosea Ballou II was a member of the no future punishment group, but was a lover of peace and concord, in that, and in all things. However, all his literary ability seems to have been at the disposal of that party, for years. Now we find him holding "moral connection", he himself having coined the most fitting phrase for the new trend.

Unfortunately, we know nothing concerning the antecedents of the other members of this new movement. They simply had not been Restorationists, nor leaders of the opposite party.

Fourth - what was the nature of the Restorationist views, which so generally failed of adoption?

From the writings of the Rev. Daniel Barker, we gather that the Restorationist party was the right wing, theologically, though on ground much safer ethically! Their theology included the older and waning ideas of Christ, all the older imagery of the mediatorial reign, etc. They really believed in punishment, as such, administered for the good of the sinner, and issuing in his repentance and salvation. They were conscious of being in accord with most of the older Universalism, and were a protest against a good part of the Ballouian theology, from beginning to end. It goes to prove that the temper of the denomination was daring, radical, and pioneering, that they should prefer to follow the new theology in such preponderant numbers, and let the conservatives cry out that the old and sound belief was in danger, without heeding. The Universalist Church was not a church in which

the right wing could win, and it did not, neither in this decade, nor in any following period.

## CHAPTER II

## Expressions of Opinion on Future Punishment, 1850-60

Coming into the decade from 1850 to 1860, we find, naturally, the same general types of belief concerning punishment in the future. Let us note their tone before proceeding to any general statements concerning this period and its significance for the development of future punishment doctrine.

## Section A. The Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

A pastor who prefers to be named writes in his volume entitled "The Divine Efficiency and Moral Harmony of the Universe", published in 1854, as follows:

"The punishment inheres to the Moral disorder, just as animal pain inheres to Physical disorder. As he who commits the greatest crimes, which are the outward and obvious symptoms of Moral disorder, must possess the greatest degree of it, corresponding to those symptoms, so also must his temporal experience be in accordance with that degree; the worst man always suffering the most. As is true relating to the pain of physical disorder of sickness, so the suffering caused by sin ceases with temporal life, agreeably to the declaration of the Apostle, 'He that is dead is freed from sin', and the Scripture doctrine, that sin is in the flesh. Whether a man is more or less sinful, death terminates both his physical and moral pain alike; at once separating him from the cause of both, namely; the flesh; and in both respects alike, the most disordered, whether regarding moral or physical condition, having suffered most by those causes, respectively....As being in the flesh, or body, sin must be thrown off with the body, after the moral disorder of the flesh, like natural disorder, shall have caused an amount of suffering in exact correspondence therewith."

For the use of groups of Universalists who were not often able to obtain any preaching, a volume was issued containing sermons for half a year, which a layman might read to any group who should choose to assemble.  
l. pp. 70-71

The sermons were provided by the leading ministers, and were intended to "contain nothing either local or temporary". Hence we find but few words relative to the question of future punishment.

In this volume the Rev. A. J. Patterson has a sermon entitled, "Day without Night", in which we catch the pulpit vein of a sound believer in no future punishment.

"There will be no night there." All the orders of our Father's throne will be unveiled to us when we go 'up from this realm of sense'. Life's shadowy ways will grow divinely radiant, when we retrospect them, with all their tendencies in view, when we see their need as we see the need of the night, when we feel the fresh vigor of that eternal morning which shall succeed this gloom, there will be in our souls no more querying, 'wherefore this sorrow?' Death and evil will appear as necessary links in the providential chain, each with its own great uses pointing toward a common emancipation.

When we look at the language of the text, 'There shall be no night there', we understand that, in relation to its present uses, there shall be no need of night. There shall be no mortality to grow weary, and need rest. And though we love to think of the 'hereafter' as an eternity of explorations and growth in wisdom and experience, we connect with that satisfying truth, the thought that mortality shall be swallowed up of a life which shall not faint nor fail, but which shall be ever fresh in youth and vigor while eternity endures. No more encumbered with the earthly, there will be no more need of earthly appropriations, nor of earthly dis-

cipline.\*1

(The Christian Helper, 1857, p. 224

The Rev. Sylvanus Cobb, in the sermon he contributed to this volume expresses his continuing faith in no future punishment.

#### Section B. Mediating Positions during this Period.

Alonzo Ames Miner, whom we have noted previously on the objection to the word 'restore', we now find more clearly setting forth his positive opinions.

"This brings me to my third particular, namely, the causes that can induce obedience, or beget salvation. Having seen that man is morally 'dead', I scarcely need remark that we should not look to him for the influences that can impart life. These come from God. The commands of God are powerful to quicken him from his sleep, and strengthen him for duty....

We must not, however, regard this force as a mechanical one. It does not seize man, bind him hand and foot, and compel him to enter the kingdom whether he will or no. Its very labor is, to make him willing. It is a moral effect that is to be produced, and a moral cause is requisite to produce it. Love is such a cause, and is alone adequate to produce the effect which we have seen constitutes salvation!!

And again,

"Now, in the assumption which has become so common in our time, of a momentum which crowds a bad man a given distance into the future world before regeneration can reach him, there is a uniform overlooking of the true nature of virtue, and a continual misconception of the laws governing its attainment. It would have crowded Saul of Tarsus, with all his malicious purposes, some weeks, at least, beyond the point at which the record informs us he was converted. It makes virtue a thing to be gained by increase of capacity....In a very able article to which we have several times referred, the writer remarks, 'I have said, it is law of nature that you cannot expand virtue in a man in a passive and instantaneous manner. I have not said that you cannot quicken it instantly.' What means this? Is virtue something lying dormant in the soul, which can be expanded in any manner, instantaneously or otherwise? Is it proper to talk of quickening virtue in the soul, thus implying its presence in a dormant state? The soul may be quickened into virtuous action; and virtue may be begotten therein. This is the real question. Cannot virtue be suddenly begotten in the soul?....We do not understand that nature imposes any insuperable obstacle to such sudden change. Even to the word instantly we will not object; for, though it involves an unnecessary intensity, we cannot doubt that a change from wrong to right, not only may take place instantly, but in numberless cases has so taken place....



as we have been speaking of? I answer, that there is a certain force of habit, there can be no doubt; but under no greater measure of truth than is often afforded in this world, all such bonds to evil and strong laws of character are dissolved; and in the glow of a freshly kindled love, the soul is infinitely superior to their power. In this world, then, or in the next - a moment before death, or a moment after, - the soul of man may become loyal to the divine law, and in that loyalty be blessed. We say nothing now of differences in intellectual or moral capacity. The reader may have that matter after his own method. We only say that any soul may be brought to love with all the power it has; and such a state is not only one of full obedience, but it is also one of full blessedness. There are no laws bearing upon the soul today, or that will bear upon it tomorrow, or in the hour of death, or in the morn of the resurrection, which can make certain of its continuance in evil, or nullify even the highest earthly manifestations of divine grace. And before it can be shown that those dying in unreconciliation, will not be speedily attuned by the glories of the coming world, it will at least be necessary to show how great those glories are, and what measure of moral power will, at our entrance upon that world, bear upon the soul. Still further, it will be necessary to show what changes, if any, are involved in, or may be produced by, the event of death; and how far it may be instrumental in dissolving the bonds to evil.

In speaking of the agency of death, we should undoubtedly take care neither to make it the saviour of man, on the one hand, nor to exclude it from the catalogue of God's instrumentalities for good on the other. He who regards it the scapegoat of all moral evil, (whose acquaintance, however, I have yet to make), does not more certainly err, than does he who regards it as only equivalent to passing from one village to another. It is not enough to show that death is simply a physical fact. God makes many physical facts instrumental in mellowing the heart, and preparing it for the influences of his truth. How often does a severe sickness prove to be fraught with richer moral experiences, than all the rest of one's life.... Is it not much more probable that death.... will prove an instrumentality for good to those who experience it? Add to this the consideration that the soul will no longer be dependent upon its present imperfect instrumentalities, and will be released from all the temptations of the flesh, thus removing the chief, if not the only obstacles to the more perfect influences of truth in this world, and for what an increased measure of effectiveness in divine truth may we not hope? Though the redeeming power is the truth still, the event of death may be very far from being unimportant to its effectiveness.

In a philosophical consideration of character, and what may be affirmed of it, it does not come within our purpose to consider at length the teachings of Scripture touching the condition of man immediately after his entrance upon the next world. Nor is this particularly necessary; since those who insist on the continuance of punishment hereafter, freely allow that there will be a greatly increased measure of light in that world, and that the condition of all will be greatly improved. But, assuming that salvation, if not itself a development, is so involved in the fact of human

development as to be of necessity gradual, they deny the possibility of immediate salvation, under however great a measure of light. We have endeavored to show, on the other hand, that redemption involves revolution - a turning from wrong to right; that 'growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth' may come afterwards; that such growth, like the growth of an infant under fully controlling moral influences, may in goodness and continued loyalty to conscience and the moral law; and that this revolution on which is predicated salvation, may be sudden and immediate. When, therefore, it is said that immediate salvation, under the increased moral of the coming world, is impossible; that 'nature herself never did, and never will admit of it,' we feel constrained to reply - not proved.

But we go one step further; even if it were proved that such change of motives and of purpose as brings the will into loyalty to conscience and truth, like the acquisition of knowledge and the development of human powers, can take place in this world only gradually, it would not follow that the same law would hold in the world to come. It is not certain that it will hold in the acquisition of knowledge in the world to come. It would be necessary first to show that this law of progress, so widely operative here, has its original seat in the mind, and pertains to the body because of its dependence on the mind, rather than to the mind because of its dependence on the body. But there are some facts not easily harmonized with this position. In the first place, this law of progress is arrested in old age, by the infirmities of the body; and the mind falls back from the state of progress it had previously reached.... Consider, then, whether still more may not be true. If the power of the body over the mind, which of itself can know no dotage, can, not only arrest the acquisition of knowledge, but restrain the manifestations of knowledge previously acquired, is it inconceivable or unreasonable that the body may so limit and becloud the mind in its action, even when most vigorous, as to give birth to the very law of progress of which we speak? And if this may be, freedom from the body is a release from the law.

Besides: placing the subject on the simple grounds of reason, can we suppose that the next world will be circumstanced in these regards like the present? If the two states are substantially the same, why are there two states rather than one? Why is not our being first given us in that coming state, if it involves the same toil and conflicts, the same evils and sufferings, that are incident to the present state?

Instead of being dependent upon the tedious methods of physical science, in the acquisition of knowledge, as in this world, is it not probable that the spirit itself will become an embodiment of all sense, and have a first hand knowledge of the justice, purity, and love of God; of the self-sacrifice, tenderness, and glory of Christ; of the inherent blessedness of purity and woe of impurity; and of the deceitfulness of those blandishments by which sin has allured us here? And with such knowledge, how can it be that the soul hitherto unregenerate can remain enslaved by a single unholy love? Were God thus to redeem men at their entrance upon the

next state, it surely could not be said to be done by miracle, in violation of our agency, or by the exercise of any other than a moral power. Our former knowledge need not be 'dashed out of our minds at the moment of death', nor need it be 'dashed in again at the next moment, in a miraculous manner.' The entire work may be in as perfect conformity to law, though it may be a vastly higher law, as is the boasted progress of this world.

.....

Granting that the principles bearing upon character here, place the subject in the attitude we have suggested, and that the increased light and glory of the coming world may, for aught that philosophy has to affirm, without a miracle, and in perfect harmony with law, regenerate every hitherto unconverted soul, it may still be alleged that our present neglect of opportunities for good, may be followed by everlasting retributive consequences. Though every soul may be blest according to its capacity, some will have acquired a greater capacity than others, and will be correspondingly blessed. The deficiencies of the undeveloped soul will thus prove perpetual judgment.

Before examining the elements of this argument, let us remark that we are far from believing that none of the consequences of this life extend into the next. This would exclude the song of redemption, and a recognition of Christ as the Saviour of the world, from the court of bliss. We are far from denying, speaking in general terms, that the acquisition of knowledge in this world is attended with an increase of power to gain still further knowledge. Nor do we deny that there may be differences of capacity of grasp of soul in the next world between men, as between angels and the Deity; though of this matter we can know very little. But we do deny that these facts, if they are such, will prevent or qualify the attainment of saving knowledge hereafter....

Conceding, however, this particular, we proceed to the claim that the larger capacity, where every measure is full, is happier in proportion to its measure; that differing capacities cannot be equally blest. This is the key stone in the arch of our modern Christian philosophy. Into this receptacle are all its tributaries made to flow. Differing capacities cannot be equally blest! But cannot differing measures be equally full? and if a soul be filled with good, is it not perfectly blest? Are not the moral like all the other powers of men in this regard? Do they not all find their highest good in their appropriate exercise and full play? Does the magnitude of their grasp bear at all upon this point? In the simple exercise of his physical powers, does a giant find more delight than an ordinary man? Are his nerves, muscles, bones, heart, lungs - any of his organs - necessarily more perfect? On account of its littleness, must the health of a humming bird be less complete than that of an elephant or alligator? Cannot a grain of sand be as pure as an ingot? a drop of water as pure as an ocean? - a ray of light as perfect as the effulgence of noon-day? What means the declaration, the greater one's capacity the more he will enjoy? .....

Thus we have endeavored to show that character pertains to our moral natures; that it does not ingrain itself into the very body of our powers; but belongs to their direction, aim, and style of action; and that we must distinguish between ultimate grasp of soul and present quality. We have seen that character is susceptible of emendation, and even of sudden revolution, while the contour of personal qualities, not strictly moral, remains the same. We have seen that there are no laws of character, looking at its inmost quality, which can absolutely secure its permanence for a single hour! Finding expression in the will, it is liable to be controlled by truth, as is the will in regard to secular affairs; and, at our entrance upon the next world, we have reason to expect so refulgent a manifestation of Divine glory as will win all hearts to God. Without miracle, this may transpire in perfect harmony with present law; while it does not appear that the soul, by its release from the body, will not pass under the dominion of a vastly higher law. We have seen that character is not a measure of capacity, nor capacity of happiness; while character is a measure of happiness; that eternal deficiency in enjoyment cannot be predicated upon present moral debasement, nor upon present of future limitation of capacity; indeed, that happiness depends not on magnitude, but on quality, that motives to present effort drawn from the assumed limitation of capacity in the future, can have no special value; and, finally, that the hypothesis of different capacities in human souls apart from their connexion with the body, is an assumption which even if true must yet find its date to rest upon.\*1

Another writer comes before us now for the first time, - Thomas B. Thayer. His views classify with those of Miner, as neither can allow any unhappiness in the future state. Thayer writes thus concerning "Degrees of Happiness in the Future Life":

"If there are degrees of intellectual power and development, if there are grades and ranks of spiritual being among men here, why not there?

Surely we have no reason for believing that the variety of this world is to be reduced to a dead level of equality in the next. The great doctrine of the resurrection, as set forth by Jesus and Paul, does not imply this. The beautiful and welcome truth of the perfect happiness of all souls in the life to come, does not require this. For all may be perfectly happy, without being made equal in this sense. Perfect happiness, which is but a relative phrase, does not rest on perfect equality of mental, or even moral, gifts and capacities....

And, moreover, allowing that the degrees of knowledge and condition always involve discontent and envy in this world, (which, however, we are very far from allowing), the inference that the same consequences will follow in the future world, implies that we go into that world without change, with

1. Character and its Predicates, in Universalist Quarterly, July, 1853, pp. 248-274 passim

with all the imperfections and weaknesses of this - which also we are far from allowing. The immense and indescribable change of condition, circumstances and influences, which will meet the soul on its entrance into the resurrection life, ought to satisfy anyone how futile all such reasoning must necessarily be, how little confidence we can have in any calculations or speculations of this sort.

.....

The great fact revealed to us by Jesus and his gospel, is that we shall be holy and happy in the future life; free from sin and temptation, free from sorrow and suffering, and ready to move forward in endless progress to higher and better. But nothing is said to indicate that all will start from the same level of mental or spiritual power; or that the measure of happiness will be the same in every case.

As we have said, all will be happy, each in his own sphere, each according to his capacity, and continually moving onward to more, rising to clearer vision, and a higher blessedness. But this is entirely independent of how much happiness each may enjoy. It may be more or less, according to the degree of advancement, or the capacity for enjoyment; and yet each be perfectly happy in the time and place, desiring no more than what comes of its exercise of its faculties in further progress. 'Perfect', as we have said, is only a relative term, depending for its value on the person or thing to which it is applied. Indeed there is but one idea that is absolute, that of the infinite. All others are relative; and that of perfect happiness, in its relation to human spirits in the future life, may embrace every variety in degree, and reach the largest latitude of description.

Let us introduce a rude comparison to illustrate the subject. Imagine a series of measures, from a gallon to a gill, each filled to the brim. Now it will readily be seen that though these measures differ, each from the rest in capacity, holding some more, and some less, yet all are full, and could not under the circumstances contain more.

So will it be with the dwellers of the spirit world - though differing in capacity and development, differing as the angels differ, yet each soul shall be filled with the joy of God, and permeated as it were, with the gracious influences of his love. Though differing in degree, as one star differeth from another star in glory, yet each shall shine in the full splendor and perfected beauty of its own particular sphere; and all together help to make up the ineffable glory and joy of the heavenly world.....

And this brings us to the point which I would not have lost sight of. While we see from these illustrations, that degrees in capacity and happiness in the future world, do not conflict with the perfect happiness of each soul in its sphere at any given time, or at any particular stage of development, we must not forget that the great law of spiritual being in this world and all worlds, growing out of the very nature of the soul, is progress - a continued movement forward and upward; an endless growth in knowledge and power, and development into higher forms of life and blessedness. This is



the order of God's creatures everywhere....

And so in the glorious world of light to which we go, progress, more and higher, is the law. Alps on Alps eternal rise. Beyond and above, they lift their glittering heights; beyond and above, forevermore - and far up their sides those who have gone before us beckon us onward, and shout to us of the glory that lifts upon their vision. Joyful in the present, we shall press forward; our very blessedness made more blessed in the exercise and development of our spiritual power. And leading us, and walking with us, and following us, familiar sister spirits crowd around; and stranger spirits, now no longer strangers, meet us with a welcome, and join us on the upward march to higher knowledge and wisdom and happiness."<sup>1</sup>

### Section C. Future Punishment Belief during this Period.

The first statement of interest in this period comes from Dolphus Skinner, who had always been on the side of future punishment, but had never been in the thick of the fight. He is defending his form of Universalism in contradistinction to the Unitarian arguments of the day, in the following:

"As to the question whether the soul will hereafter have a perfect consciousness of all that it has been and done while here, there is a variety of opinions among professing Christians. Some professedly Liberal Christians, whose general system lays the foundation of hope for the final 'restitution of all things', nevertheless stop short of that conclusion, and urge, as a difficulty in the way, the idea that the soul, retaining the memory and consciousness of the past, must forever look back with regret upon its past transgressions; and though there shall be no penal fires or material flames to torment it, yet an eternal remorse for its past sins and shortcomings will prey upon it forever. Others, again, to avoid this (to us obviously illegitimate) conclusion, deny the premises altogether, and with one sweep annihilate the memory of the past, with all consciousness of former sins and sufferings. This, to us, seems like falling upon Scylla in order to avoid Charybdis; for it robs us of one of the noblest and most essential faculties of the soul. If the memory of all past sins and sufferings be blotted out forever, so, it seems to us, must be the memory of all past virtue and happiness; and the soul will lose its conscious identity, will cease to be the being it was, and so can have no consciousness of salvation from sin, no gratitude for deliverance from evil; but its existence, (if it exist at all) will be entirely unconnected with its former being. This does not look like the scheme of salvation revealed to us in the Scriptures; for that evidently supposes an enlargement, an increase, of the knowledge and powers of the

1. Universalist Quarterly, April, 1857, pp. 131-139 passim



soul in every respect.

....'But', asks the inquirer, 'if they remember those heinous sins, will not that memory forever afflict them hereafter?' We think not. It is true, the first consciousness of guilt, the first overwhelming conviction of its enormity, fills the soul with remorse; and this anguish may continue for an indefinite time, for a longer or shorter period, as the circumstances of the case may require, to effect a perfect reformation by that godly sorrow, which needeth not to be repented of....As certainly as 'godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not/be repented of', so certain it is, in our mind, that memory and consciousness of past sins will not eternally mar, if it does not ultimately enhance, the blessedness of the redeemed. When godly sorrow and chastening have fully done their work, and the redeemed shall look back through the long vista of the past, and see distinctly each link in that vast chain of infinite wisdom and beneficence by which God is drawing the world to himself; - see that the wrath of man has been made to praise God and the remainder of that wrath has been restrained; see that their evil intention and wicked deeds have been overruled for good; that there sin abounded grace did much more abound; they will then cease to feel remorse or regret, and in view of God's super-abounding wisdom, power, and goodness, they will exclaim, in the deep humility of their souls, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be all the glory and praise forever.'<sup>1</sup>

The next year brings forward the opinion of another writer, signing himself T. S. K. Writing on "What Must we Do to be Saved?" he sets forth briefly the orthodox view of the future alternatives, and continues thus with his subject:

"Now let it be understood, at the commencement, on what grounds we object to this theory or definition of salvation. We do not object on the naked ground that there are terrors connected with it. Trinitarianism does not overrate the danger of a bad, unchristian life. But it misunderstands and mistakes the danger. It affixes a set of arbitrary terrors to an evil life, which are not to be visited upon the sinner until a distant day.....

Neither do we complain that this system points to a great difference in the future life between the good and the evil. We are ready to maintain that there will be in the future life a difference between the condition of the good and the evil, - a difference which will continue so long as the moral distinction continues. But we object that it does not see that, in this life also there is an equal difference between a true Christian and a depraved soul....

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1. The Soul in the Future State, Universalist Review, Vol. IX, April, 1852, pp. 163-5

Here is the worth of liberal Christianity: it shows us that it is a good thing to live in God, and with God, that it is in itself the best thing, the only life, the true joy, the sole salvation. It teaches us that it is a bad thing to live away from God, and without the life of love, - that it is the worst thing in the universe, the loss of life, and, in itself, darkness and perdition. The danger of the path of vice is, not that there are pitfalls in it which, at the grave, let us suddenly into a sea of flame, but that it is a gradual descending slope into spiritual degradation and death, - a slope, the inclination of which depends on the human will, and which, perhaps, keeps the same angle into eternity.....

The common theology of Christendom fails to see that salvation consists in being something, not in getting something..... Things work by spiritual laws. If he deserves hell, it is because he is inwardly vile, and then he is in hell. We do not enter into heaven; heaven enters into us, and according to the quality of our inward life. Salvation is of grace only as the inward peace and joy that spring up after a good deed are of grace; only as health which follows care and exercise is of grace. Why talk of casting ourselves upon the mercy of God for salvation, when salvation is a spiritual state, and when all which that mercy can do in the case is to furnish the opportunity and means for our own culture. As well might the farmer throw himself upon the mercy of God to produce his harvest from an unplanted and untilled soil, or the student trust in divine goodness to fill his mind with knowledge, while he only muses upon learning, as the heart expects salvation from a mere reliance on creative goodness, when that goodness itself has made it, and its degrees, to depend rigidly on law....

We see, too, from this consideration, the error of those who look forward with a feeling of rapture to entrance into a future state, as though such an entrance will make all men instantly happy. I do not mean that any class of Christians, as a sect, hold to such a doctrine. But the doctrine, wherever held, seems wholly inconsistent with the nature of salvation. Spirits cannot be cleansed as a garment can be washed and purified from stains. There is no heavenly chemistry as yet discovered or revealed, that can extract the soil of depravity from the heart, and make it white and pure. Moral evil is a voluntary degradation of our being which we have contracted and which we must cure. And certainly change of place itself cannot cure us... Our sin is part of our identity; and stripping off the flesh at the grave does not change our identity or alter our character; and God cannot make us pure at death unless he works a miracle, and alters our identity....

The problem of life is this, - to rise through culture into nature; to put ourselves rigorously to the service of duty; even when it may be irksome, that duty may at last become our joy; to obey patiently until obedience becomes attraction, and labor play. A power returns into us from every good deed we do, even if it was hard to do it, and adds to our inward life. The highest reward of duty is, that it raises our character and enables us afterwards to act more readily from impulse, with spontaneous delight.... The more we discipline ourselves, the deeper channels do we open within us for the pulsation of God's spirit through. We are saved not by getting

happiness, but by becoming holy. The payment for what we do is always what we are.

As God looks upon the moral universe, spirits range themselves under his eye, in groups, according to their qualities of heart, the purity of their ruling love, the texture of their being. According to the purity of their ruling love, do they approach, or recede from Him. Life is a series of stages. Heaven and hell are differences of degree. Eternity is the onward sweep and development of the life of time. 'In the Father's house are many mansions'. The spiritual world is a vast hierarchy of ranks, where the place of each is determined by internal excellence. Men are attracted to God by the purity of their hearts and their inward affinity with Christ. There is no favour in his government. A rigid mathematics determines our destiny. God does not lift any spirit into heaven, and condemn any sinner by an arbitrary decree. At every moment, we are saved in proportion to the nearness which our natures will permit us to approach the throne; we are lost in proportion to the distance, to which by the gravity of inward evil, we must sink and remain."<sup>1</sup>

The same issue of the Universalist Quarterly carries another article of great interest for our investigation. The author is Hosea Ballou II, one of the leaders of his day in the church. Recalling that he at one time was reckoned as a believer in no future punishment, we appreciate the more the soundness of the views now expressed, and the tolerance of spirit as well. In his article entitled, "Condition of Men after Death", he deals with the subject as follows:

"It may be thought to require more delicacy of treatment than we are master of, to introduce, with profit, among Universalists of our times, that eye-sore of a question, Whether the experience and character of our present life will have any effect upon us after death. It is, however, a question that cannot very well be avoided in the course of inquiry we are now pursuing, - to say nothing of the place it must always occupy in every religious mind. Why should we not look into it, not as partisans, but as reasonable men, and try to see what it amounts to, how much it involves, what bearing it has upon our common faith, and how the inspired teachers appear to have thought with respect to it. We shall venture on the attempt....

We will observe that there is, at bottom, an agreement between Universalists on both sides of the subject, to a much greater extent than they seem commonly to be aware. If the question were, Whether the present life affects the future in any way, we suppose they would unanimously answer in the affirmative. For, we should have no future existence at all, but for the present. Now, this consideration of itself, opens a very wide field of dependence relations, and consequences, which we never can shut out

1. Universalist Quarterly, January, 1853, pp. 73-28

from our thoughts, except in moments of systematic theorising. At other times, we instinctively recognize them, and make use of them. Again: we suppose it is agreed among us that much of our experience, here, will have an influence upon us hereafter. The providential afflictions that we suffer, the chastisements that are inflicted upon us for our sins, and, in general, the whole system of discipline, made up of mingled good and ill, through which we are passing, are habitually spoken of by all Universalists as intended for our benefit, partly at least in the future state.....

So large a proportion, then, of the elements of our present life will act upon the future. How is it with the remaining elements? If, indeed, we can find any left, that are not inextricably involved with these. For we must consider that the all-pervading system of discipline in which we are growing up and forming our characters, embraces the whole of our mortal experience, so far as it comes from without. And if we admit, what we all so earnestly claim as true, that our present discipline under God has a bearing upon our condition after death, it seems that our main question is already answered, in the gross, and answered unanimously. Let us, however, take it in its particulars. Let us take our personal conduct, or rather the character we form in life, and ask, Will this have any effect beyond the grave? We confess, we do not see how we can either answer in the negative, or pretend to ignore the conclusion, after answering the general question in the affirmative. To say that our treatment in God's providence, or our experience here, will affect the future, but that the character, which is formed under it, will have no such bearing, appears to be absurd, - giving to outward circumstances a force that we deny to the internal reality. At the risk of seeming to be a little abstruse, we will observe, that the system of our present discipline does not act upon us, and is not so much as even recognized by us, except as it works within us and produces developments of an intellectual, moral, or passional kind, or of all kinds together. If we look at the case a moment, we think it will be plain enough, that affliction or comfort, pain or pleasure, joy or sorrow, good or ill, becomes such to us only by its effects upon us, by being felt by us, by working within us corresponding changes of the kinds we mentioned. Now, it is through such changes alone that either of them can benefit, or harm, or concern us in any way, here or hereafter. And when we say: that the discipline to which we are now subjected will affect us hereafter, it is the same as to say that the elements of character which it leaves with us, will work upon us in the next world.

We have suggested that there is, at bottom, a much greater agreement among Universalists on this subject, than they themselves commonly suppose. The very nature of the case compels us to agree in the main, and in our ordinary moods. For we cannot think of a future life that is sufficiently connected with the present to be of interest to us, and worth our caring for, without admitting, sometimes unconsciously perhaps, that the thousandfold chain of cause and effect runs through, unbroken, from one to the other. Our commonsense, our instinctive longing for assurance of animortality that shall be properly ours, withholds us from severing the chain at death;

for we feel - if we do not actually consider, that to do so, would leave all beyond us utterly dead to us, as the sundering of the web of nerves at a joint would leave the remainder of the limb a useless appendage. The need we have, in our afflictions, of looking forward to eternity for the fruits of the pain and anguish that we or our friends now suffer, keeps the connexion open in our minds, even though it get a little obstructed in our formulas. And besides this, the very grounds of our faith in the salvation of all men, through the mission of Jesus Christ, the frequent occasion we have to enforce the Scripture teachings that it is he who shall reconcile all things to God, the stress we lay on the argument that he, 'who gave himself a ransom for all', shall perfectly accomplish his undertaking,- these oblige us habitually to recognize such a communication of influences from the present to the future, as is broad enough for all the energies of the kingdom of Christ to pass onwards with increasing efficacy into the next world, and there to complete their work. To shut up that communication, or to ignore it, would cuttuss off at once from the possibility of maintaining Universalism on the Christian principle, that is, as the result of Christ's mission. Now, we would ask, whether these are not, with all Universalists, the great undercurrents of thought that are ever flowing on in their minds, down deep beneath the particular dogmatic formulas they construct at the surface? We think it is the case. Whenever they give free course to the stronger tides of their faith, when the fountains of their hearts break up at the presence of mourners or of the dying, when their souls overflow in the hopes of immortality,....then it is that we hear these thoughts uttered alike by them all. And may we suggest how important it is to maintain these profounder sentiments unimpaired, in which so much of the vitality of our faith lies. If we preserve these in their free action, it is comparatively of little consequence how we decide the question of temporary rewards and punishments hereafter.

To us, however, the New Testament seems to recognize the fact that the responsibilities of our present life reach into the future, and that the character which we form, here, will affect us at our entrance in the immortal state....

On the other hand, the consequences of a disobedient and impenitent life seem also to be traced into the future state. We have an instance in the case of 'the spirits in prison', who were disobedient in the days of Noah... Again: St. Paul seems to recognize our future responsibility for a bad life...

Other texts might be quoted in point, did it seem to us a subject of primary importance. But whatsoever we may think concerning the question of responsibility hereafter, the paramount concern is to see that we do not isolate the future life from the present, so as to cut it off from sympathetic connexion with our existing selves and interests. No matter whether purposely or unawares, if we do so even by ignoring, by implication, or by remoter logical consequence, we shall find that the deadly elements, which we have involved, do not long remain inactive; we shall find, in the event, that we have destroyed the vitality of the glorious truth which distinguishes us, and that, as soon as we have got people thoroughly indoctrinated, we have begun to make the worldlings among them indifferent, and to send the religiously disposed on a search for something more satisfactory to their profoundest wants."<sup>1</sup>



In the next issue of the Quarterly, for April, 1853, Thomas J. Sawyer takes up the favorite verse of the no future punishment advocates, Romans 6:7. "For he that is dead is freed from sin."

"With this passage of Scripture, the readers of our religious literature must already have grown familiar. It is often quoted as a proof-text of the doctrine, somewhat prevalent among us, that sin and its punishment are confined exclusively to the present life. Of the truth of this doctrine, I frankly confess myself not satisfied; but whether true or false, I am fully convinced that this passage has no bearing whatever upon it.

I am aware that, to many excellent brethren, the whole subject presents itself in a very different light. To them the doctrine appears true, and the proof direct and conclusive. Great stress, indeed, is laid upon the plainness and simplicity of the apostle's language, here. 'Here', it is said, 'we have the express declaration of the Bible in regard to this subject. We want no reasonings. Away with your speculations and philosophy, and give us the clear doctrines of the Bible. The apostle says distinctly that 'He that is dead is freed from sin;' and if the dead are free from sin, then there can be no sin in the future world; and if no sin, so no punishment...

The argument of the apostle, then, is simply this: 'The doctrine of grace does not lead to licentiousness, because the believer is dead to sin by his union with the death of Christ; and, being planted in the likeness of his death, he must also appear in the likeness of his resurrection; that is, he must live holily. ....I doubt if we attach any very definite meaning to our words, when we talk of a sinner's being freed from sin by natural death; of millions of our race being purified in a moment, by some kind of mechanical means, we know not what, but entirely without any moral action of their own souls, repentance or faith, and by simply crossing the mysterious line that separates the present from the future.'<sup>1</sup>

A contributor to the Universalist Review of the date of October, 1854, treating of "Personal Identity with Reference to the Future Life", says:

"Another fact communicated is, that there will be inequalities in the condition of man after death. If it be assumed, that whatever part of man goes into the future world takes with it its identity, or its peculiar and essential qualities, no inference can be more illogical, than that the conditions of men will be made equal at the event of death. If, for instance, we may reason on the assumption that the mental qualities peculiar to man are alone to survive the death of the body, then this remaining personality, carrying with it its proper identity, must commence the future life with the same state of development with which it leaves the present. The outward

1. Universalist Quarterly, April, 1853. pp. 166-175



condition of this personality, in consequence of the new circumstances under which it is at once placed, and of the sudden removal of certain impediments now attached to it, may, it is true, be instantly and very materially changed; but, however rapid may be its future progress, the personality must still commence the new life at the very stage of development in which it left the present. Two individuals therefore, who die both at the same instant, - the one a man of high mental powers with a high degree of culture, and the other, a man of low mental powers with a low degree of culture, - must certainly commence the future life on terms of great inequality. And further, as we must presume, that, whatever may be the new circumstances and disentrailments, both persons will equally share them, the inference is also clear, that, for a time at least, this inequality must continue. In view of such considerations, we can have no respect for a philosophy which equalizes all characters at the moment of death; which assumes that, on this event, the philosopher and the savage, the saint and the wretch, all stand upon the same footing of mental equality. Even could we substantiate the questionable supposition, that death destroyed all the vicious tendencies of Nero, it does not follow that his moral susceptibilities instantly rose to the measure of Howard's...

The future existence of man's personal identity also teaches, that the consequences of character, as formed here, extend into the future state of being. This statement must not be confounded with another, to the effect, that the punishment and rewards due to a man's conduct are to be experienced after death. We do not speak directly of individual acts and their deserts, but of the character which an individual forms, and hence of individual acts only as they help to form this character; and we affirm that some of the effects of this character must be experienced in the future life. This inference follows from the fact already shown, that man's mental development must commence in the future life at the point where he leaves the present. The higher, therefore, in the formation of a good character, he succeeds in making the mark of his progress before he dies, the higher will that mark be with which to commence the future; and for the same reason, the lower he fixes, for the present life, the mark of his decline, while in the formation of a bad character, the lower will be his stage of development on entering the future world. And hence, to speak only of this one fact, the whole difference which one individual is able to make, with reference to his mental growth, between the formation of a good or of a bad character here, must be regarded as the sum of all the consequences he here is able to produce on his future condition. The continuance of a man's personal identity does not admit of any sudden enlargement or contraction in the essential qualities of his personality. Experience shows that these qualities may grow or decline to a great extent, and with great rapidity, without destroying the identity proper to them; but no experience favors the idea of any violent change in these respects; and in the absence of such experience, no such change must be presumed.....The doctrine, therefore, that we have the power, in this world, to affect our condition in the future world, is a clear inference of the position assumed to be settled, that man's personal identity must accompany

him into the future and immortal life."<sup>1</sup>

In his review of Dr. Beecher's "Conflict of the Ages", Rev. Moses Ballou says:

"Our author's view of probation I cannot accept. It agrees with that usually held by his brethren, in this respect, namely: in supposing that it is a condition in which men are acting in reference to a future state of rewards and punishments. He does not allow that they are tried, judged, and treated precisely according to their deserts now; but supposes that judgment is postponed to a period subsequent to the death of the body, where it will be administered fully, terminating in the assignment of all to their final doom of weal or woe.

In rejecting this position I would, by no means, be understood as affirming an entire and abrupt moral separation between this and the future life. The same moral beings that exist here, must exist there. All which is essential to their existence and identity must remain with them. The results of their discipline and training here must be carried along with them there. That essential same character which one has on leaving this world will be found with him on his entrance into the next, much the same as the child carries to the commencement of the higher school the exact amount of attainments with which he left the primary department, I cannot doubt. That in any changes which it may undergo afterwards, the same laws will be observed which rule its formation here, I must believe. I do not think that any actual sin can extend beyond the time when the resurrection or raised state, is fully attained, for Christ tells us that there men are to be equal to the angels. But the resurrection itself I regard as a great process which will raise men morally to this high condition referred to by our Saviour.

I have no good reason to think that the laws of education, which govern here, will be given up, or essentially altered, so long as spiritual culture or improvement is desirable."<sup>2</sup>

And, lastly, in a sermon by Rev. H. R. Nye, on "Patient Waiting" we find the following paragraphs relative to our subject.

"Those who are engaged in unholy callings, and those who are wasting their powers in the course of sin, flatter themselves with the idea that because they are not suddenly or miraculously arrested in their iniquitous career, - that - because God does not stop them at once by some arbitrary power, and lead them to work in new vocations, and to throw off their old habits, and to put on nobler and diviner ones, there is no God,

1. Universalist Review, October, 1854, by G. H. E. pp. 413-5
2. The Divine Character Vindicated, by Rev. Moses Ballou, 1854

or, if there is, His eyes are closed, and they can go on in their wickedness with impunity. They do not consider, that, little by little, their strength is wasting away,- that for every evil thought, and every idle word, and every sinful act, they are daily, hourly, perpetually paying a penalty,- that they are already, in their character and condition, what they should have feared to be, - that they are already what they have been fitting themselves to be - that in all periods, and in all places, their life will be just what they make it, and that they are not now suddenly led into the path of virtue, because God sees that they have not yet learned that the way of transgression is hard, because He discerns that they must feel the burdens of sin longer and more deeply, before they will be disposed to hear and to obey His voice.

But all these things are true. God takes His own time to bring the sinful to a sense of their condition, His own time to arrest them in their evil path, and to lead them from it into the better one of righteousness and peace; and this time is, when they grow weary and faint with the famine of sin within the heart,- when they feel they can no longer bear the load they carry upon their souls, and they say: 'I will arise and go to my Father, whose grace is sufficient for me, and confess my sins, and enter into the joys to which He calls all the weary and all the heavy laden.' "1

#### Sect. D. The Significance of the Period.

The features of note in this decade are as follows:

1. The question of future punishment was not settled. Hosea

Bailou II, called it "an eyesore of a question.". In the same year, 1853, the sermons preached at the session of the General Convention were printed in book form. In these we find not one word on this still unsettled question.

2. The same trends are evident in this as in the preceding decade.

There are no trends disappearing, and no new ones appearing.

3. The future punishment group seems to be stronger in its faith.

The idea of progress in the other life as in this, is set forth more clearly, showing that static conceptions of life are being replaced by dynamic conceptions.

4. The mediating views are developed in the utmost detail, the argument with the future punishment group being followed out to the very last point. This group write as though confident of their cause. They

will not allow that man in the future feels a sense of loss, even though he is eternally the loser by reason of his earthly sin! Better let people be different in spiritual capacity in heaven, than to let any of them be sorry!

5. This is not a fruitful period, on the whole. Remembering how absorbed men were in the approaching civil conflict, we are not surprised that theological discussion was not greatly advanced.

## CHAPTER III

## Expressions of Opinion on Future Punishment, 1860-70

The same general types of thought continue through this decade, hence it will be convenient to study them in the same order as in the previous periods.

## Section A. Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

W. F. Manley, a midwestern Universalist, still holds to his faith that there is no future punishment, as he held it in former years. In 1860 he completed the second volume of his "Biblical Review; intended as a new and improved commentary on the Bible." the second volume being on "Egypt and the Wilderness". He says:

"One thing more should be noticed in connection with punishment. No one who reads, with the least attention, this part of the Bible, can help observing, that all the punishments alluded to, or implied, are strictly temporal. They belong only to this world. ....If the doctrine of future punishment be true now, it was true then; and if true, there could have been no reason for concealing it, but every reason to the contrary. What must we think then, when we see the most profound silence observed in relation to such punishment - when we find Moses constantly urging upon the people motives drawn from the rewards and punishments of this world, and never referring to any punishment beyond the present life.

If the doctrine be true, how are we to defend the character of God in withholding it....

It seems to many persons a strange thing that all these wicked people should have been taken out of this world to a place of happiness; but that they should be taken out, and sent to a place of infinite misery, with no means of escaping such a doom, and with no knowledge of such exposure, does not seem to have excited any surprise. To us the latter supposition is much the more marvellous of the two; and of the two marvels we prefer to choose the least, even though it may involve some difficulties."<sup>1</sup>

We have evidence that another minister of the middle west held to no future punishment, in the record of the debate on Universalism between the Rev. B. F. Foster, pastor of the First Universalist Church, Indianapolis, and the Rev. J. H. Lozier, a Methodist pastor of the same

city. In the course of the argument Mr. Foster falls back on the favorite passage, I Corinthians 15:

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly!....As many as have died in Adam, as many as have borne the image of the earthy, are to be made alive in Christ, and to bear the image of the heavenly! But Mr. Lozier contends that there is to be no change after death - that as 'death leaves us, so judgment finds us' - that if we die sinners, we shall be raised up sinners, and continue in sin and suffering through the endless ages of the future. But the whole scope of the Apostle's argument is to show that there will be a great, a wonderful change! That our relations to the spiritual world will be entirely different from what they are in the present existence. That here, we are surrounded by all the elements of imperfection and corruption - while there, we shall be freed from all such influences, and be prepared to enter upon a higher, purer, and more glorious state of being! He concludes his argument by declaring emphatically that there shall be a change after death... 'Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed! In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed!'"....There is no escaping the conclusion, that it embodies the resurrection of all mankind to a state of immortal blessedness and peace. And until Mr. Lozier can prove that an incorruptible and an immortal being can sin and suffer, our proposition will stand in full force and effect."<sup>1</sup>

The same chapter is used by L. J. Fletcher as the basis of an article for the Universalist Quarterly, which concludes thus:

"Natural death to be experienced by all men - spiritual, immortal life, the universal gift through Jesus Christ. Natural death, which introduced a world to the darkness of Sheol, the great and ever impending calamity which all men dreaded; and immortal life, in which all are to become as the angels of God in heaven.

11...On one side is mortality; on the other, immortality. On one side, darkness and condemnation; on the other, light and salvation."<sup>2</sup>

But the real champion of this theory for this period seems to be the Rev. I. C. Knowlton, who first claims our attention with an article entitled, "Death and Glory".

"We like the phrase, 'Death and Glory'. It is full of rich meaning.

1. Theological Discussion on Universalism and Endless Punishment, Foster and Lozier, Indianapolis, 1867, pp. 115-116
2. "Death in Adam, Life in Christ", Universalist Quarterly, October 1866, p. 12



It is the exponent of the blessed Gospel of Jesus. Notwithstanding the contempt with which it is sometimes uttered, we believe it worthy to be placed in the title page as the motto of the New Testament. Death is not a mere incident, valueless and powerless; but an efficient agency that, like the purifying storm, the sleep-inducing night, and the long Sabbath of Winter, work out glorious results.

.....

To die is to gain exemption from sin - from sinning. 'He that is dead is freed from sin.' We are aware that some metaphysicians think sin is a depraved state of mind. These learned men may sincerely deem it necessary to attach new and fanciful meanings to old and well-understood words; but we prefer the Bible definition. It is clear, concise, unmistakable; - 'Sin is the transgression of the law.' It is not a state, but an act, an unlawful deed. He who has a depraved mind, may be a sinner, but where no law is violated no sin is committed. This is undeniable. In this sense, he that is dead is freed from sin. He cannot sin any more.

Death transports the soul to that celestial Eden, - to those 'Isles of the Blessed', where the opportunities, the power and the inducement to sin, are all absent. Spiritual beings cannot sin; and there being no temptation, no inducement, they would not if they could. By referring to the moral laws that are binding upon all souls, this assertion will become evident truth.

.....

Possibly, some of our readers....may think that ignorance and its consequences will continue hereafter. - We cannot prove the contrary. As said before, we have little positive knowledge. It may be that on crossing the river we shall find only a dark, dreary, desolate shore, - a continuation of earth's twilight, mist and uncertainty; it may be that the poor Feegee will see no more than he saw on the low coral islet where he spent his savage earth-life; it may be that there, as here, we shall continue to grope in darkness and doubt; but we cannot help hoping for something better. Inspiration informs us that 'all shall be made alive in Christ', and this must be far superior to our earthly estate. Although down in weakness, corruption, dishonor, and in a physical body, the soul is raised in power, incorruption, glory, and in a spiritual body, and this certainly is a great transformation. In the resurrection we shall be 'equal to the angels, being the children of God'. In such an exalted state, there can be little ignorance or unbelief. When we arrive there we shall know that there is an immortal life, and a Supreme Being; we shall see Jesus, angels, and heaven; we shall realize that virtue is bliss, and our own destiny glorious, and then our hardness of heart, impenitence, and misdirected affection, must terminate in a moment. Finally, finding ourselves surrounded by the pure and blest whose faces overflow with great, glad thoughts and holy love, we must at once be drawn to them and changed into their divine likeness; and the disposition to sin will flee away to return no more.

.....

Every human being may reasonably expect to retain all his spiritual powers and characteristics in the next stage of existence. Jesus, here or there, is the same loving Jesus, Paul the same logical Paul, John the same tender-hearted John, Judas the same penitent Judas, and each human being, himself.

Admit this, and not to admit it renders our hopes of heaven as valueless as a dream, and it necessarily follows that each person in the resurrection state will distinctly remember his earthly home, life, conduct, and experience, and all the peculiar circumstances in which he left behind his friends or foes....The saint will remember his virtues, the sinner his vices, the philanthropist his generosity, and the miser his meanness. Lincoln has not forgotten his glorious Emancipation Proclamation, nor Booth that fatal night and foul assassination. The departed father that had cherished his family so faithfully, realizes the loneliness, sadness and destitution of his widowed wife and orphan children. The departed villain remembers how, with diabolic arts, he caused the innocent to suffer, and knows they continue to suffer the results of his villainy.....

In this way, we may arrive at the conclusion not only that there is misery beyond the grave, but also a vast amount of misery. The keen agony of regret and remorse will sting the guilty wretch, - bitter self-condemnation, 'weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth' will be his constant avocation - as he looks back and meditates upon the terrible and lasting results of his earthly crimes. Many a poor saint, too, who at death left wife or child or friend in the chilling grips of poverty, or the loathsome slough of degradation, or the cruel toils of persecution, must be sadly grieved as he thinks of their wretchedness. Thus, heaven itself will contain many a pure, noble soul that is pained by anxiety and agonized by sympathy and unsatisfied desires; - the desire to have their earthly loved ones at once saved and blessed. This, however, is more misery after death than anyone wishes to believe in. It blots out heaven and crushes all our fond hopes. Hence, various theories have been devised to modify this almost universal misery doctrine, and, if possible, deliver us from the fear of suffering hereafter. Three of them are worthy of notice.

The first is the supposition that no earthly feeling ....no human sympathy,.....will survive the shock of death....The sins and sufferings of earth will not disturb the serene joy of the saved and the eternal damnation of relatives and friends will even augment the bliss of the elect!

This, misery is excluded from heaven, and also almost every thing that renders heaven divine and desirable. Our feelings of compassion and sympathy,....are the noblest, divinest traits in human nature....Without their existence and influence, earth would be hell and its inhabitants fiends....If these eminently Christian emotions are to be destroyed by death.. heaven must be a cold, heartless, dreary realm....

But this strange theory has another phase. Though it diminishes

the beauty and glory of heaven, it makes some amends by also diminishing the anguish of hell. If the good in the world to come have none of these sympathetic feelings, then of course the bad will have none of them.....No matter how many persons on earth are suffering keenly and going down to perdition, these heartless reprobates in hades can feel no regret, no remorse, or self-condemnation for having been the cause....If there is no joy or sorrow in heaven over earthly affairs, there can be none in hell. Those, therefore, who believe in any post mortem misery, must either admit that the blest in heaven participate in the suffering, or else conclude that the doomed are rendered unhappy not by regret, remorse and the terrible upbraidings of conscience, but by penal fire and tormenting demons. Thus, this theory seems unreasonable and unsatisfactory.

Another and more plausible theory is, that the wonderful and glorious scenes of the immortal spheres occupy and absorb the soul that it does not think of its past life or of earthly affairs. As the traveller, weary, anxious, sick, during all his long voyage across the ocean, forgets it all on his safe arrival at the magnificent city to which he was journeying, so man, fatigued, tempted, tried, tortured, here, when he arrives in heaven and sees the transcendent beauty of paradise, and hears the sweet songs of the blessed and feels the rapture of perfect love, may at once be wrought up into such an ecstasy of bliss, and so completely to continue therein, as never again to have one thought of his former home, life or friends.

Taking into consideration the Scripture statements that 'the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,' that we are to be 'fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body,' as it was seen on the Mount of Transfiguration, that we are to be 'changed from glory to glory', in endless progression, and many other hints of like import, we can almost believe that earth, beneath vast, gorgeous, glowing heaven, may dwindle to a point, vanish from sight, and be entirely forgotten. Even here, at times, while witnessing, or participating in, some scene of thrilling interest, we become oblivious to everything but the great thought of the occasion; much more there, in the immediate presence of Jesus and the holy angels, amid scenes inexpressibly sublime,- the arrival of young souls to rest on the bosom of the Redeemer, the reunion, recognition and exceeding joy of those long parted, and the seraphic expressions of wonder, love and praise, we may so revel in the realities around us as never again to think of the tear-dimmed, dreary, by-gone earth.

Thus, indeed, our immortal career may begin; but eternity is long, love cannot die, death does not erase the records of memory, and hence, at times, if but for a moment, the soul in heaven will recall the scenes and relations of earth, and be blessed or pained by the remembrance. The recognition of friends is the result of remembering the past. It can take place in no other way. With recognition, by the mental law of association, many of the incidents and circumstances of the previous acquaintance must flash before the mind. Thus, memories and visions of earth, - of earth

with its joys and sorrows, its virtues and vices, - will enter heaven and carry with them more or less of pleasure and pain. This theory, therefore, although it may infer only a small amount of transient misery in the future state, still leaves the problem unsolved, and the perfect blessedness of the departed in uncertainty.

There is one other theory, and it is abundantly satisfactory to all who can and dare adopt it. It is this. To our undeveloped minds and limited vision, the earth seems full of confusion, disorder and useless woe.....The enormous crimes and diabolical cruelties perpetrated by war, slavery, and religious intolerance, appear no benefit, but a dead, total loss to the world. The earth-life is a mystery. There is darkness around and in every soul. No one can tell why we were formed so weak, so little, so blind.

But the 'Lord God Omnipotent' reigneth, and it may be that in the clearer light and keener vision of the next life, we shall see that all things actually do work together for good, and the best good of all concerned. We may see and understand how Adam's Fall set in motion the machinery of a progressive race; how every destruction has made room and prepared the way for a new and better order of things; how every artificer has builded wiser than he knew; ...and how all pain, poverty, failure, deprivation, separation, mistake, injury, chastisement, are eminently and invariably beneficial to our true spiritual growth and welfare.

If so, and if there is an almighty and infinitely wise and good Ruler, the fact and the revelation seem possible and probable; then the problem is solved. No soul seeing all this can feel any lasting regret, remorse, anxiety, or misery. It may be that some spirits darkened and palsied by long years of sin, cannot at once perceive this glorious picture of affairs; but the wise, kind Father can educate and train the lowest soul to see at last that his universe is in perfect order, and all things conduce to His Glory and the good of His children. Then all will be satisfied, and happiness reign supreme and universal."<sup>1</sup>

Later in the same year, in an article on "Salvation", Mr. Knowlton elucidates his opinion still further.

"But the principal objection against our theory yet remains to be noticed. It may be said, 'men's characters go with them beyond the grave; and hence there must be in the other world, ignorance, sinfulness and suffering, from which the unfortunate ones will need to be saved and from which Christ will somehow save them.' We have never seen it fairly proved that men's characters go with them beyond the grave; we do not see how people on this side of the river can prove it; we cannot find it taught in the Bible; and hence we take the liberty to doubt it, at least in the broad sense in which the word character is generally used. Personality,

1. Universalist Quarterly, January, 1867, pp. 30-47

including memory, affection, understanding will and spiritual power, will doubtless survive the shock of death; but the assemblage of qualities, feelings, opinions and circumstances that make a person's mental and moral estate, are as varied as the fantastic figures in a kaleidoscope. At every turn, one combination is broken up and another formed. Our frame of mind, - our spiritual condition - is continually changing. All the time the mind is going and growing; but it cannot pass over the same road in the same way, a second time. If an ordinary day's observation, experience and growth, make some change in a person's intellectual status, if a remarkable day makes a great change, if a great agony can turn the hair white and bow down the soul to humility, in a single hour, if a sermon, a discovery, a victory, can inspire a higher, freer, purer life, then the momentous day of death must make a momentous change in man's character. As St. Paul did not carry his Jerusalem character to Damascus, but lost it in a certain bright light that flashed upon him on the road, so it seems to us impossible for a man to carry his earthly character to the Celestial City. When his eyes open to the marvelous light of spirit life, the old thoughts and feelings must give place to new ones. Unless all the laws which regulate mental action are annulled, the soul in passing into the spirit sphere must undergo a change greater than it can experience while in the body.

.....

As we understand the matter, Jesus did not undertake to do anything for man, mechanically and by mere will power. It was not his mission to lift up or cast down, to add or take away any faculty, to awaken men from the sleep of literal death or pour into them salvation, in any cold mechanical way. He did not attempt to render man immortal or God propitious. Instead, he sought by precept and example, by miracle and moral heroism, by affection and revelation, to induct the knowledge and conduct essential to human welfare here; - to make known the truth respecting God, duty, reward, punishment, and immortality, which man needs to guide and cheer him in this his rudimentary state....

These are our views of salvation, expressed as briefly and plainly as possible. They may not be entirely correct. More light may break in upon the world and enable us to see more distinctly. But, today, these are our opinions, and, holding them, we have no sympathy with any maudlin attempts of a Universalist to frighten the ignorant by warning them of a wrath or a misery to come beyond the grave. If, as we know, the fear of endless torment has not in millions of instances moralized its believers, what possible shadow of good can be done by any theory of a limited, diluted and uncertain post mortem mental misery? Our denomination has a higher mission, a nobler work, which it must do or die. It is our manifest duty to appeal to reason rather than fear, to deal in demonstrable facts instead of jaundiced fancies, to educate people in the laws of their well-being, and not to darken counsel by words without knowledge. It is for us to show people exactly what sin is, and then to convince them that it is bitter, poison, pestilent, fatal to all we hold most dear. In fine, realizing our near relation to God, and the glorious destiny that awaits us all, we should

strike brave, strong blows for truth and right. Then we shall be a power and command respect. But if we unwisely desert our flag, and fall back upon the futile attempt to reform the world by threatening people with some mild reformatory discipline in eternity, another sect will arise and take the place we ought to occupy, and do the work we ought to do, and into that church, God will pour his richest blessings."1

#### Section B. Mediating Positions during the Period.

From an Easter sermon preached by F. H. Chapin to his church in New York City, we discover that he was not preaching future punishment, nor, on the other hand, an open and distinct avowal of no future punishment. We hope that he had courage to preach his real opinions, or convictions, on occasion, but the following statements savor of an attempt to keep to middle ground, and offend no one.

"Here, then, open before us those practical points which, upon this Easter Sunday, I propose to urge. This, I repeat, is the general proposition which is based upon the words of the text, that the most essential element in Christ's resurrection, the most essential element in what may be called the resurrection of any man, is spiritual in its result. No matter where you place the resurrection, or with what mode you may arrive at it, its chief result is the uprising and victory of the soul.

No man has ever drawn aside the veil of the future life so that we could look full upon its realities; for although Christ spoke of it as a truth, and demonstrated it as a fact, he left its chief features hidden in their own grand shadow. .... Yet in all the shapings of our fancy, in all the conclusions of our reason, our most essential idea of the immortal state is that it is a spiritual condition, a mode of existence in which we are freed from the despotism of the flesh. We believe that there we shall discern absolute truth with clearer vision, and that there we shall neither linger for appetite nor halt for repose.

Our language shall be speech of action. There we shall know even as we are known; there we shall see the great and good whom death took long ago - now the beatified over whom death has no power. There we shall commune with Christ, not through the distance of time or the perplexities of interpretation, but face to face. There no anxiety shall trouble our worship, no doubt overcast our faith, for we shall bathe in the stream of uncreated Being, and dwell in the eternal noon of God....



Now, of course I do not underestimate the experiences of the future world; I do not deny its different conditions in some respects; but we must not draw too sharp a line between this present world and another. Innumerable errors have grown out of that conception. We must not think too much of death; death's narrow bridge, over which Christ walked in coronation robes; over which martyrs passed in glorious procession. Death in itself is a mere physical change after all, and we must not make too much of it. Any experience that a man may have in this world or any other, can hardly be greater than when over his dead soul there moves a divine influence and in him are quickened holy aspirations; when he stirs in the grave-clothes of evil habit, and breaks the bands of wicked will; when he leaps from the sarcophagus of sensual indulgence, and comes into spiritual light. When the familiar earth shines in the brightness of immortal sanctions, and faith tears away the veil of the Unseen, and he realizes that he is a denizen of eternity and a child of God, then is there indeed a resurrection from the dead.....This is not merely a symbol of the actual resurrection. It is the main point in that resurrection. It is the main point for a man to rise from his sins and his selfishness, his ignorance, and doubt, and fear, into the spiritual truth of Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>

In 1862, T. B. Thayer, whose convictions we have already discovered, put out a "Theology of Universalism", which has been republished as often as needful down to the present day, and still remains the standard work on Universalist theology. Its influence must have been great, for many years after its first publication, if not in more recent years. Thayer argues that punishment is corrective, and that all men get present reward of righteousness and punishment for misconduct, bound up with the very consequences of our deeds and thoughts, on ourselves and on others. But, in this comprehensive theology, future punishment is not even mentioned. We find his teaching, however, in the chapter on the resurrection.

"The Sadducees fell into the common error, common even in our own time, that there is no change after death, that we carry with us into the future world, the feelings, preferences and characteristics of this world; that what we desire here, we shall desire there; and what we do here, we shall continue to do there.

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All this the Saviour positively and plainly denies, and shows

1. Extemporaneous Discourses, E. H. Chapin, 1860, pp. 250-258

that such reasoning is false, that the law of analogy does not hold to this extent; because this life is earthly and that will be heavenly; this life is in a material body, and that will be in a spiritual body. The difference in character and condition, in desires and pursuits, in the elements which go to make up our happiness, will be equally great....In this world we are men, subject to all the frailties and infirmities of human nature, in that world we shall be as the angels, children of God because we are children of the resurrection.....

Now the Saviour says that the resurrection works such an entire change in man, so purifies and exalts his soul, lifts him so entirely out of the earthly into the heavenly, that he becomes, by this very anastasis or transformation, a child of God....It is growth to the soul, enlightenment, instruction, education; and, through these, the lifting it up, leading it up, helping it to rise up, into that spiritual perfection, that 'image of the heavenly', reaching which it becomes the child of God in the highest and divinest meaning of the term....When the resurrection has completed its work on man, he becomes angelic.

.....

The power of God over all souls, is infinite and endless, and no event can place them beyond his control. The power which he has delegated to the Saviour, remains with him till the work he gave him to do is finished; and, certainly, it is not finished in this life in the case of millions of souls dying in unbelief, and ignorance, and sin. Consequently, this power to say, continues beyond death; continues, as Paul says, till 'the end' cometh, and this end, as shown, comes after the resurrection and the destruction of all evil.....

If it be asked, 'How is Christ to save men after death?' the answer is, By the same means, and in the same way, as before death, doubtless; only increased in power and directness, and operating without the obstructions incident to the flesh or earthly nature.

The simple truth is all men are saved, in a greater or less degree, after death. The spiritual change of the resurrection, is necessary to the completeness and happiness of every soul. Are any perfect here?....Is any one on earth, equal to the angels of God in heaven? The answers to these questions are patent to all, and reveal the truth and necessity of a change after death.

We are not perfect, not as the angels, when we die, not even the greatest saint on earth; but we shall be in the resurrection. How can this be, if there be no change after death? If Christ do not still aid and bless us as a Saviour?

There are some special points which, for the sake of the inquirer, may call for farther elucidation and illustration. And it is necessary, in

order to meet a supposed difficulty, often stated in the following form:

'A change of place is not a change of character. To suppose that its entrance into the future world will effect the moral tendencies of the soul, or give a new direction to its dispositions, desires and aims, is as reasonable as to argue that a voyage to India would change the moral character of a man, or make a saint of a sinner. No: the character we form in this life, we carry with us into the other.'

This obligation proceeds on the ground that the interest of Christ in the soul, his relation to it as a Saviour, ceases with this life; .... But the Saviour, as shown already, never abandons the soul; ... He follows it in this world, and into all worlds beyond, as a Guide, and Teacher, and Redeemer till it is found and restored.

But this objection, or the comparison it sets up, fails specially by falsely substituting 'place,' or the act of passing to it, for 'circumstances'.

If a voyage to India would have no effect on the character of a man, very likely India itself would. It is not pretended that the mere passage over the sea would affect him morally; but most assuredly he would be affected by the new circumstances and influences which would meet him at his coming; by new associates, and customs, and manners; new estimates of virtue, new principles of action, and views of morality. And how abundantly was this illustrated in the early history of the English East India Company. How completely, in many cases, were the men who first went out to the country, revolutionized in character, principles and morals.

So it is not the mere act of dying, or passing from one world to another, that we regard as affecting that change in the moral condition of the soul, which sets it heavenward, and turns all its impulses and aspirations toward holiness and God. But it is the mighty change in its circumstances, the new and powerful influences by which it will be engirded and acted upon, as soon as it enters upon its new sphere of being....

And can we estimate, then, too highly, the power for good over the soul which will be put in action by the new and wonderful circumstances in which it will be placed on its entrance into the spiritual world, by the mighty and divine influences brought to bear upon it? No longer seeing through a glass darkly, as it did when veiled within the body, it there sees as a spirit, face to face, and perceives the real character and true relations of things. And what sudden revelations of truth, of love, and beauty, burst upon its anointed sight. The glory of God's majesty, the excellency of his wisdom, the extent of his goodness, the tenderness and the love of the Saviour for man, the joy and the spiritual beauty of the angels, the blessedness and ever-increasing knowledge of the redeemed, the boundless creation

stretching out on all sides into the invisible, the countless starry worlds that lie like shining dust under the feet of God!.....

And now let us turn to another thought connected with the subject. It is sometimes said, that a man cannot be made virtuous or jolly, as a soiled garment or vessel is made clean by washing; that the results of conduct are not arrested by some sudden miracle, at death, and the soul separated from its sins, purified and saved, by a kind of moral chemistry, without any effort or volition of its own; that death is wholly a physical result, and has nothing to do with sin, nothing to do with salvation, which is altogether a spiritual result.

It is certainly true that death has nothing to do with sin directly, yet the body has a great deal to do with it; and as death delivers the soul from the body, it sets it free from the temptations of the body.

Suppose a man falls into the sea encumbered, not only with his ordinary clothes, but with thick, heavy, over-garments, his feet encased in heavy boots, and his hands confined in stout gloves. By great exertion and struggle, he succeeds in throwing these off. The getting quit of these, does not, indeed save him from drowning; but it certainly puts him in a better condition for reaching the shore. So death does not, itself, bestow purity, knowledge, and happiness on the soul, but it certainly puts it in a better condition for reaching these, by freeing it from all the clogs and hindrances of the flesh.

.....

With regard to the observation that 'the results of conduct are not arrested by a sudden miracle at death,' we may speak more cautiously. As to the miracle, we need not spend words. Experience shows that, without a miracle, the results of conduct, or more properly, what would be the results if that conduct were continued, are often arrested by influences far less potent than death.

Behold the triumphs of Reform in all its phases. Take, as an example, the man who, for years, has given himself up to the most reckless indulgence of appetite, rushing down from one depth of debasement to another, till he becomes degraded as a brute, and ferocious as a fiend. See him now, all at once, sudden as the flash of the lightning, arrested in his course! A look, or a tone of the voice, a dream, a beautiful memory, the prayer of his childhood, the vision of his dead mother's sweet forgiving look, the remembrance of a sister's love, the face of a child, a strain of music, turns back the whole tide of his being; and the steps that were just now going downward to hell, are turned upward toward heaven!

And if such slight incidents can so suddenly arrest the sinful and the criminal, and turn the whole current of thought, and feeling, and

purpose, into a new and right direction; can death, which liberates the soul, from the body and its temptations, be powerless in its influence? Is it presumptuous to suppose that this great event, which changes the conditions, all the outward relations of the spirit, and opens for it a new era of existence, will arrest its evil tendencies, and exert a mighty moral influence upon it? I think a just and intelligent philosophy would predict precisely such a result on inductive principles.

And let us not be deceived by any false ideas of forcing the soul into the right, or violating the laws of its spiritual constitution, by turning it to God. The new influences acting upon it in the resurrection, may affect it more powerfully, and more quickly impart to its desires and affections, a right direction, than while in association with the body; but it will be in perfect accord with the nature of the soul, with the laws of its being, and with its volition and freedom. We believe in no violation, or forcible suspension of these. Jesus will work out the redemption of the soul in the resurrection, by the same agencies which he employs here. He will not save by 'mechanical' forces or means, but by such means as shall address themselves to the natural conditions and elements, of the spiritual being.

The growth of a plant may be hastened by an increase of light and heat, or by a more favorable location, or fitting soil.....But all this is in perfect harmony with the radical nature and laws of the plant; nay, could not be at all, if it were not so.....

So with the soul, in the resurrection. It is brought into more favorable circumstances, and its growth is more rapidly set forward by a great and sudden increase of spiritual light and heat; but in perfect harmony with its nature, the laws of its structure and development, and the capacities with which it was originally endowed. The germ of all the soul will attain to, and enjoy, in the future life, is doubtless within it now and here. The more genial clime of the spirit world will only quicken and develop it."<sup>1</sup>

#### Section C. Future Punishment Belief during the Period.

Only two defenders of future punishment appear in this decade.

One writes over the initials L. B. B. on "Sin and its Sequences, Immediate and Remote". In this article he attacks the positions of the opposite side openly. The more important paragraphs are as follows:

"No less unwarranted and practically unsafe is the idea, that sin

1. Theology of Universalism - Thayer, Edition of 1904. pp. 217-241 *passim*

leaves no consequences to be realized beyond the grave. This extreme is a modern reaction from the ancient dogma of no present retribution. One view limits to the present life all mercy and forgiveness; while the other circumscribes within the same small compass all justice and punishment. In either case, the bed is too short and the covering too narrow for the repose of a broad, far-reaching, and untrammelled mind. There is no authority in Scripture, or the deductions of sound reason, for limiting the exercise of any of the divine attributes, either to this life or the future. While a large portion of the Christian world are repudiating the dogma of endless punishment, but a small part are adopting the opposite ultraism of no future retribution. The latter is principally limited to a fraction of a single sect; while the former is discarded by one whole denomination, by a majority of one or two others, and by a considerable number in nearly all orders in Christendom. The theory of no future discipline has been before the reading religious world for nearly half a century, and is losing ground, even in the denomination within which it originated.

Although, as heretofore promised, the response of the moral sense directly follows sin, when the conscience is in a healthy state, yet there are circumstances under which this immediate reaction would seem to be precluded. By frequent repetition, and long continuance of any particular sin, the conscience ceases to revolt from familiarity with the evil,....The falsehoods of trade, the cruelties of war, the affected earnestness and pathos of the lawyer in a wrong cause, and the duplicities of the politician, are illustrations in point. In cases of this kind, the judgment, as well as the conscience, sometimes becomes perverted. The individual has ceased to recognize correct moral principle as his rule of action.

Let us now suppose this conscience to be re-quickened, and the judgment re-enlightened by some influence in the present life. The memory runs back over these misdeeds, and the resuscitated conscience goes back with the memory. As the memory pauses at the commencement or the contemplation of each sinful act, the conscience pauses, and forbids the deed. And as we repeat, in memory, the perpetration of the wrong, the conscience is pained with the remembered violation.

But this re-awakening of the conscience does not always come in the present life. The conscious approach of death usually produces it; but this effect is often obviated by the suddenness of the event. The hardened pirate may be seized, by mutiny, in his sleep, and laid to slumber in the coral chambers of the ocean, or pierced by a ball from the pursuing man-of-war, with blood and plunder in his heart. Reason, analogy, and Scripture, would seem to teach that, in such a case, the compunction would follow death, if memory survives, and conscience resumes its vitality. 'He that doeth wrong shall suffer for the wrong which he hath done', and if not in this life, in the future.

.....



One argument urged against any future retribution is this: All ins, on the whole, is for the best. Though man means evil in the act, and though present, seeming evil may result, yet God will overrule it for future and private good, as in the case of Joseph's brethren selling him into Egypt. The sinner, seeing this in the future world, will feel no pain, but even rejoice in remembrance of his former sins. Now if a knowledge that our sins are overruled for good will prevent remorse for past sins, certainly a firm belief in such overruling will produce a similar result. Many of us believe, in the present life, in such a consummation. Does such belief prevent compunction for transgression? If so, then, this belief prevents all present punishment, save the mere physical results of sin. In this case, the doctrine must be immoral. ....But a belief that God averts the tendency of evil, and transforms its results, does not relieve the violated conscience.

.....

Another argument in support of the hypothesis that limits all the sequences of sin to mortal life is drawn from that class of passages in Scripture which speak of present punishment, as, for instance, 'The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner.' It is loosely inferred from this, that if sin is punished here, sin cannot be punished hereafter, else the sinner would receive double for his sins. This argument seems based upon the old idea of punishment - as a kind of revenge specially inflicted by the Deity in retrospect of sin, instead of a consequence naturally following from man's moral nature. Adopting the newer and more rational theory of punishment, as a reaction of the abused conscience, the argument fails in application. It would be in amount like this: Sin produces remorse in the present life. Therefore sin committed here cannot produce remorse hereafter, otherwise there would be a double remorse for sin. This is no more logical than to say that a sin committed today produces remorse.....today; therefore there can be no remorse for the same sin tomorrow. None will dispute that a sin committed this week may occasion compunction next week, or in future years. And if the sinner should die in the day of the transgression, it is not easy to discover how death should preclude remorse, if memory and conscience survive the body.

The promise of the final restitution is sufficient for all the purposes of consolation. It is enough to be assured that the forces of evil will be intercepted before they reach the cord on which is suspended man's final destiny, without contending for the unrevealed and questionable doctrine that all unhappiness is confined to earth. Why, then, the tenacity sometimes manifested in denying all future penitence for sin? Perhaps it may be answered, that the Scriptures do not positively reveal any future retribution, and our prooftexts may be demanded. In regard to the testimony of the Scriptures on this point, there is a difference of opinion which it is not the present purpose to discuss. Certainly the Scripture does not deny this doctrine, nor affirm the opposite. And waiving the inferential

argument already adduced, that the Scriptures declare the punishment of all sin, and that all sin is not suffered for in this life; and even allowing that the Bible does not positively declare the doctrine of future punishment, we should still be unauthorized in a dogmatic denial of all future discipline. In this case, it should be regarded as an open question, like future identity, and the recognition of friends.

The only passage of Scripture usually alleged, or much relied on, as disproof of future retribution, is this: 'He that is dead is freed from sin'. Allowing, what is by no means indisputable, that this text refers to literal death, the utmost it affirms is, that the departed do not continue in transgression; that the dead are freed from sinning. Having previously showed that the moral consequences do not always immediately follow sin, it were superfluous to argue that a cessation from sinning does not necessitate an immediate discontinuance of the penalty. It is not so in this life, either in regard to the moral or the physical effects of sin. He that is in the penitentiary, is freed from stealing; not only from the temptation, but from the possibility; and yet he is suffering the penalty of crime, it may be in regret and humiliation, as well as in the loss of liberty. So it may be in the future, for a season, with those who die impenitent. For aught this passage shows to the contrary, there may be 'spirits in prison' suffering the penalty of former sins, though delivered and precluded from their repetition.

It may be argued that if the evil reminiscences of the present life awaken regret in the future, the regret may be endless; and that, hence, the theory of future disciplinary suffering involves the doctrine of endless punishment. But the natural tendency of remorse, in this life, is either to produce penitence and reformation, and consequently pardon and relief, or to exhaust and paralyze the sensibility of conscience, and bring moral agony. The latter occurs when the transgressor continues under evil influences; but the former, when he is aided upward by the power of grace. In the future life, there will be none but elevating influences, and the sorrow will bring penitence and pardon and salvation.

The strength and duration of penitential sorrow are in proportion to the magnitude of transgression and the depth of guilt. The remorse of Adam for the transgression in the garden may have recurred occasionally during the whole of the nine hundred years that he sojourned on earth. It was doubtless keenest at the first, growing fainter with the lapse of time. There is a recuperative power in the moral, as in the physical nature, which, with time and treatment, will heal the wounds that have been made by sin. There is a limit to the power of grief, even in this life. And as time bears no proportion to eternity, the deepest sorrow a finite being can suffer must have an end.<sup>1</sup>

We are enabled to know what was being taught in Chicago at about this time, from an article from the pen of the Rev. W. H. Ryder, D. D. I. Universalist Quarterly, July, 1861, pp. 248-251

It is entitled, "Salvation in Christ not limited to this Life."

"To whatsoever branch of the Christian Church we may belong, as a responsible being, he is interested in such questions as these:- Is there any connection between conduct in this life and condition in the life immortal? Does character inhere in the moral constitution, thus forming a part of the substance of the soul, or is sin wholly of the flesh so that its consequences end when the body dies? And if the consequences of our conduct here to reach beyond the event of death, how long will they last - to what extent will they affect our peace - will they ultimate in happiness?

We shall make no attempt to answer all these inquiries within the limits of an article proper for these pages, but taking up the leading topic of Salvation in Christ, and the relation of the individual to the work of redemption, we shall have occasion, in part at least, to cover the general ground which these several questions touch.

Among the leading doctrines which are distinctively stated in the New Testament, we find these four: 1. Paternity of God; 2. Immortality of the soul; 3. Responsibility for conduct; 4. Final Subjugation of all souls to God. The first of these doctrines - Paternity of God - Christ expressly states when he teaches us to pray, 'Our Father who art in Heaven'. The second of these - Immortality of the soul - Jesus illustrated in his own resurrection from the state of the dead. The third - Responsibility for conduct - is taught in the repeated condemnations of sin, and the affectionate entreaties to holiness with which the Scripture abounds. The fourth - Final reconciliation of souls to God - is the grand idea of the New Testament - the very purpose for which Jesus came into the world - to 'seek and to save that which was lost'.....

Character is immortal; for it is inseparable from our identity.... The best have come short of the God-given example and have need of forgiveness and purification. All are there, as here, under the care of God, pupils in the school of Christ. All have stains of soul to be whitened by the moral bleaching of the fuller and grander display of the glory of virtue, and the abounding love of God. And yet between the bad mind and the good mind there is a radical difference in love.... The spirit of the murderer, or of any intentionally wicked person, is untamed and rebellious; it is not in the kingdom of God, and in the nature of the case cannot be, either in this life or in any other, while it is thus disobedient. It must be purged of its evil desires by repentance, and be clothed with a new purpose before it can enjoy the rewards of obedience, and the rest that remaineth for 'the people of God'.....

Christ is presented to us in Scripture under the figure of a physician. The work of salvation is very fitly represented by the healing of the sick. The Saviour cometh to us to apply the remedies needful to procure

our spiritual health. The presence of the remedies will not heal us; they must be used. We must work with Christ. We can no more have our salvation from spiritual sickness effected for us by another, we doing nothing, than we can have our physical diseases cured by applying the appropriate remedies to another patient. Salvation is in no sense an arbitrary gift; it is not outward accumulation but inward growth. The call, then, which Christ addresses to the world, is to a life of purity and peace....Those who heed this call are saved, and those who do not heed it are unsaved, and will remain unsaved just as long as they resist his entreaties.

The radical difficulty with many, touching this topic of personal regeneration, is that they deny to the soul all opportunity for repentance and growth subsequent to the death of the body. No mistake in theology can be more fundamental. Death is but an event in the soul's progress, and of itself decides nothing as to the soul's essential moral condition. The Kingdom of Christ, as we have seen, existed long before he revealed it to this world - he did but extend it into time and open an entrance to it on this side the grave. But in the sweep and scope of his plan - rather God's plan of redemption developed through him - he knows nothing about this world and that world. He deals with the souls of men, not with their bodies as such - his Kingdom is open to souls whether in the body or out of it. Christ's Kingdom bridges all the space between the throne of the Father and the soul that seeks it.....

That death will largely increase the soul's opportunity for growth in grace seems too plain to be disputed. Paul's doctrine of the war among his members is of universal application....Death will liberate the spirit from this bondage to the flesh. The change of condition will be indescribably great....But great as the change necessarily must be from life in the flesh to life in the spirit, it is not to be supposed that the structure of the soul will be affected thereby. The opportunity for progress may be a thousand-fold increased, but the progress actually made comes through personal exertion as before, and not from arbitrary force. Whether in the body or out of it, Christ is the soul's Saviour, and he alone possesses the remedy that can heal it of its diseases. Obedience must be voluntary in order to be efficacious.

It is the duty of every Christian Teacher to make the doctrine of personal regeneration the most prominent theme in his ministry.....The topics which belong to the pulpit are manifold, but each should in some way relate to the spiritual health of the hearer. To convince is well; to convert is better. Right ideas in the head is the human method; right motives in the heart is the Divine method. Man is a sinner; he is to be addressed as such. Nor can much be done toward converting him, until he so far realizes his condition as to seek for help. It will not do to flatter his pride by teaching his competency to save himself, nor ease his conscience by the shallow philosophy that 'whatever is is right'. Sin must be treated as sin. And we need to be earnest about the matter - look the real facts straight in the face. God help us as a people to be faithful to our great charge. And God dispose

all our ministers, in their pulpit labors, and in their pastoral care, patiently and inquiringly to consider, whether they have hitherto always employed the best methods to make our holy faith the 'power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.'<sup>1</sup>

#### Section D. Significance of the Period.

The outstanding feature of this period, so far as available material shows it, is its reactionary character. The no future punishment group has a determined and confident new champion. And, more vital yet is the fact that the author of the one and only recognized Universalist theology, as a volume, is all but a believer in no future punishment. In some passages he does not allow it, and in others he does. This work was accepted and admired.

It is not necessary to remind the reader that this decade was that of the Civil War, and its aftermath of exhaustion, and attempt at reconstruction. This undoubtedly accounts for the lack of constructive work along the lines of future punishment, and perhaps is partly responsible for what seems to be a swing back towards a faith in a perfect heaven of rest and peace and joy. To members of a struggling, war-torn nation, such a concept, especially if already familiar to them, would appeal powerfully, as a contrast to and final refuge from, the sorrows and bitter tangles of human life on earth.

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1. Universalist Quarterly, January 1864, pp. 46-60

## CHAPTER IV.

## EXPRESSIONS OF OPINION ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT, 1870-80

## Section A. Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

We find two advocates of no future punishment in the literature of this period. One is the Rev. George W. Quinby, of Maine, who is nearing the end of a long ministry, during which he has consistently held to the faith as he first embraced it. A few paragraphs will suffice to show his view and its assumptions, as they are argued and reargued in his volume of comfort for mourners, entitled, "Heaven our Home".

"Then there are those who reject the above extreme views respecting the wrath of God and the endlessness of suffering for a portion of God's great family in the resurrection life, but who, nevertheless, believe that the future is a world of sin and suffering as well as this; that a change of worlds works no moral change in man; that he carries all his evil lusts and passions with him into the resurrection life, and begins there where he leaves off here, and hence he will continue to be an object of God's displeasure and punishment there as well as here.

.....

All this, though an unspeakable improvement upon the old ideas, detracts immensely from the beautiful doctrine of the Gospel relative to the resurrection and the resurrection life; robs Heaven of its glory and the soul of that sublime hope of the pure and beautiful, which is 'an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast.' If the above concerning the future life be true, then that life will be no improvement on the present, and, therefore, Heaven can be no Home, such as the confiding Christian anticipates,..... Though translated from this existence to another, all souls will still be under the domination of sin and therefore continue in a condition of pain and sorrow and error. For these views, the author of these chapters wishes to say distinctly, he has no sympathy; on the contrary, to behold the beautiful truths of the Gospel thus bereft of their sweetness and enshrouded in darkness in the house of its friends, is a source of unspeakable regret to him; hence he would give them no countenance, but employ his efforts, however limited, in their correction."

After a lengthy exposition of his views, he sums up as follows,



in entering the discussion of his last positive point, (after which follow several chapters of refutations of future punishment positions, in the same strain):

"In pursuing the grand theme of a Heaven for all God's great family in the world of light and beauty, we have shown,

1. That man does not, and cannot possess the same constitutional nature in the future life that he has in this existence.

2. That a change of worlds necessitates a change of bodies - the future body being pure, spiritual, beautiful, immortal and glorious.

3. And an equally radical change must take place in all the elements of his nature, the resurrection being not simply a lifting up of the creature out of the mortal into immortality; out of the earthly into the heavenly, but out of the imperfect into the perfect; out of the condition of weakness, frivolity and sinfulness of our imperfect condition in this world, into the strength and holiness and completeness of a purely heavenly and divine state.

4. All this we endeavored to show to be true, reasoning from analogy. And,

5. These views we strengthened by contrasting the present imperfect physical brain with the future perfect spiritual structure that man will possess in the higher life, for the habitation of the soul; and through which the soul will have opportunity to develop itself, unfettered by the clogs of the flesh, forever and ever.

.....We would now further present the plain and positive testimony not only of the apostle, but of our dear Lord himself, to the effect that sin will not and cannot be a concomitant of man's nature in the resurrection life, but that it will be utterly absent from that existence."

Quinby goes on then to argue from I Corinthians 15 and from Jesus' controversy with the Sadducees on the subject of the resurrection, that both Paul and Jesus taught that men will in the resurrection be like the angels, hence sinless, perfect, and happy.1

Of far greater depth and significance is the deepened conviction of Alonzo Ames Miner in the faith of no future punishment, both because he

1. Heaven our Home. 1876. pp. 111-182 passim. Quotations from pp. 111-112, and 160-161

was at this period in the prime of life, and also was a recognized leader in the denomination. The church in Boston which he held at this time was formerly that of Hosea Ballou, whom he assisted and then succeeded. One is inclined to think it a question whether this association affected Dr. Miner's views on this subject.

In 1878 he published a small volume of five lectures, which he had delivered in his church, entitling them, "The Old Forts Taken". The last of the five, which in its printed form is a reshaping of the original lecture, is "What Universalism has to say of the future life". The argument will be outlined, (figures having been added).

"1. Now, say our philosophers, if we retain our identity in the next world, we must carry with us all that goes to make up our present being - our affections, moods, emotions....purposes and aims; and, in a word, our present characters.

This proposition contains a manifest confusion of ideas. Identity primarily pertains alone to our personality; secondarily, to our nature as beings of perception, reason, judgment and conscience, requisite to give an assured home to our personality. Nothing that is changeable about us can be included in this category. Our moods, therefore, our objects of affection, our hopes and fears....must be excluded. These may or may not remain the same. Our character as rational and responsible beings, distinguishing us from all other creatures, is unchangeable; but our moral character, which makes us censurable or meritorious, may change from year to year: often does change even from day to day. Identity, on the other hand, continues the same, not only from the cradle to the grave, but doubtless throughout the entire duration of our being.

.....It appears, then, that nothing can be predicated upon the continuance of our identity in respect to the continuance of our merit or demerit, nor of the rewards and punishments consequent thereon.

2. Nor is the argument for future punishment, based upon conscience, more successful.....Conscience may be said to be made up of two elements, - the one variable, and the other invariable. The one embraces the intelligence and judgment to which we have attained respecting any moral problem; the other includes the sense of obligation to do the right and abstain from the wrong which we have come to recognize, and that sense of self-approval or self-condemnation which we experience when we do, or fail to do, what we

think our duty.

In the discharge of this latter function, conscience may be said to act uniformly; commanding us to do what we think is right, and rewarding us accordingly:.....

But what we think about any moral problem, and how we judge its right and wrong, depend upon our intelligence, education, culture, and all molding influences.....

It will be seen, then, that what our philosophers dignify with the name of prophecy of conscience, is simply what our education, intelligence, and judgment lead us to expect; which expectations spring not from the invariable but from the variable element of conscience....

Given a man educated and still a full believer in the doctrine that this life is simply one of probation, and the next exclusively one of retribution, and he will expect future punishment. That expectation springs, not from his moral sense, but from his general conviction. Place over against such a man the veteran atheist whom I once met, and who, a few days before his death, at ninety-five years of age, declared that he 'believed in no God but Nature, and no life beyond the grave.' That man's conscience did not prophecy future punishment; contrariwise, only annihilation and rest.

3. Again, it is alleged that memory insures future pain as a consequence of our present sinfulness....Now as memory will survive in the next world,——and as the memory of our manifold sins will undoubtedly be among the things it will recall, it follows that the pangs of remorse will be proportionately experienced.....If this be so, several important conclusions will follow.

First, if one sin remembered gives remorse, every sin remembered will give additional remorse; and a degree of remorsefulness past description may follow.

Secondly, if a remembrance of past sins as we enter upon the next life necessarily brings remorse, then the like remembrance of them at any distant period in eternity will continue to bring a like remorse;.... It follows that remorse is immortal in the soul that has sinned. This reasoning would not only establish the fact of future, but equally that of endless, punishment.

Thirdly, since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and since memory will be to all a like reminder of their moral unworthiness, it follows that all souls will experience not only future but endless remorse in view of the sins of this life. We are thus led....to the very comforting doctrine of endless punishment for the whole family of man, both the penitent and the impenitent.

The error is a palpable one. It is not true that when memory recalls

a past wrong, it necessarily brings remorse. Such a proposition overlooks the great fact of Christian forgiveness....

It would appear, then, that the problem of future punishment cannot be resolved by the fact that our identity will be forever preserved; nor on the ground that conscience prophesies future punishment; nor yet on the ground that the memory of transgression necessarily gives pain....

4. Those who are confident that philosophy determines its truth, turn now to the demands of justice. Every man must be rewarded according to his works. ...Now, as it often happens that the last act of a man is a sinful one, and as justice must have its claim, punishment, it is thought, necessarily awaits such a man after death.

.....That can be more just, then, than that God should require our supreme affection? ...This is the great, the primary, the abiding claim of justice; a claim it will never give over;....

Secondly, this claim no man has fully rendered; and all have, therefore, become amenable to the demands of the law.

Thirdly, since obedience to the law is a moral fact, disobedience is likewise a moral fact; and as every domain has its own sanctions, the moral domain has moral sanctions. Sin, therefore, which is a fact of the moral nature, brings upon itself the penalty or condemnation which that nature can inflict.....Thus sin is the very seed of woe; it brings upon itself its own penalty. Not measure for measure is given; rather it is a stream of bitter waters flowing from a bitter fountain. Dry up the fountain, and the stream will cease.

Fourthly, the same act which violates a known moral obligation, and is therefore a sin, may violate various physical or social laws;...

Now condemnation of conscience, the proper punishment for sin, ceases when forgiveness is accepted. It is not a question of specific acts, receiving a specific amount of punishment. It is rather one of moral condition, out of which flow moral consequences both retributive and just. Penitence and faith change that moral condition, and the consequences cease to flow... Faith is the pivot of this revolution. There is a moment when one comes to believe; a moment when he comes into possession of 'everlasting life'. No matter what was the last preceding act, that act was the outflowing of the unbelieving heart, in which still abode condemnation....The moment he believes, 'he hath everlasting life'....The sinful condition is at an end; and, strictly speaking, the punishment is at an end. Justice now has secured its primary claims, - a believing, loving, loyal soul..It asks no more.

Nor is the fact changed, whether that moment in which faith is

reached be the last moment of this life or the first moment of the next. Whatever may have been the last act of this life, if, in the opening of the next, faith and love shall come to be cherished, everlasting life will be enjoyed; punishment will have ceased, and justice will have gained its end.

Observe now, we are not saying that faith and love will be thus gained; we here submit only that there appears no reason why they may not be....

Fifthly, it will be observed that in these reasonings we attribute no saving agency to death. Whatever else death may do, it does not save men. However it may suit the purposes of the devotees of error to misrepresent us on this point, they are absolutely without excuse. Death may deliver us from temptation. It may profoundly impress us as a fact. Viewed both in future and in praesenti, it may quicken our sensibilities to the wondrous truths of the gospel, whether manifested here in Christian teaching and in divine providence, or revealed in the clearer light of eternity. But it cannot take the place of those truths, nor discharge their functions. We must hear Christ's words and believe on God who sent him, or somehow gather the spirit of such hearing and faith. Then shall we have everlasting life....

Sixthly, there are other consequences of our sins that may remain after punishment has ceased.... There are results which are not retributive. Many of the physical consequences of improper living, whether knowingly or ignorantly incurred, remain for a long period, even through life.... Many are the ills of life, - sicknesses, accidents, effects of climate, - which are not punishments for our sins, as many are the blessings of life;.... which are not rewards of well-doing....

Turning back now to our problem, we inquire, Has philosophy any thing else to say in support of the doctrine of future punishment? Yes; it now takes up its final position. It says that there is a certain persistence of character which makes sudden change impossible, that there is a growing power in habit which tends to permanence in evil, so that persons dying in sin cannot but continue in it, at least for a time; and that the principles of the Divine government are ever the same, so that as we find them here we shall find them for ever.

.....

But is it true that a man cannot suddenly turn from the wrong to the right? All history answers in the negative. When, accustomed to the ways of sin, he seriously and finally wills henceforth to do right, - as many a man undoubtedly has willed, - his character is revolutionized. Some time may elapse before the change becomes known to his neighbors; but it is known at once to himself and to his God. The possibility and the practicability

of this is not an open question. Life is a continual illustration of it. Hence the first of these positions breaks down.

Secondly, nor does the argument from the force of habit possess any more validity.....With the bad man, habit gives a like facility to evil, increasing one's power of mischief, enlarging the scope of his vicious aims, and coordinating his powers in the execution of his wicked plans. But when he chooses to abandon his ways of transgression, habit has no power to force a continuance of them. In a word, habit can give facility to both good and ill; but it has no power to coerce them.....

Thirdly, it remains for us to notice the fact of the permanence of the Divine laws as bearing on future punishment. Of course the laws of God do not change. The principles of his government are ever the same. Those laws of themselves, however, do not perpetuate punishment in this world; no more will they in the world to come. It is man's relation to the law, as a transgressor that insures the continuance of condemnation; and as long as that relation endures, whether in this world or in the next, the punishment will endure.

Now the fact to be established is that men will continue sinners in the future world - and thus stand in such relation to the law of God as involves punishment. This has not been proved. On no mere philosophical ground can it be proved. Men, all along the pathway of life, turn from good to ill; from ill to good; and from one degree of merit and demerit to another. Gather up all that philosophy can say - and it appears that men may continue sinners in the next life, and hence be punished there, - or they may not. All reasoning of the sort in hand comes short of the mark, until certain facts, which philosophy can never reach, are determined. For these we must look to the Scriptures; and to the Scriptures alone.

6. Perhaps I ought not to pass, without a word of remark, the proposition that a life of sin deadens the sensibilities and shrivels the moral nature; so that however one may be redeemed from sin and condemnation, he cannot enter, as he otherwise might have entered, into the higher joys of heaven; nor can he share in so large a measure the blessedness of salvation. Such a man, it is alleged, experiences a kind of negative punishment in the loss sustained through undeveloped capacity.

Granting the deadened sensibilities and shrivelled moral nature, of which I am by no means sure, and all that remains of that soul is still saved. It feels no privation; experiences no lack; joins in ascriptions of praise to the Lamb; and, by the very terms of the problem, is fully blest - blest to the extent of its capacity.

Now, if any thing remains that can be called retribution, be it so; I know of none to object. But, let it be observed, such speak without Scripture warrant....



7. We turn now to the Scriptures of inspiration, and inquire whether or not their light is as uncertain as that of philosophy. Does revelation clearly settle any thing concerning the future life?....

In the first place, the Scriptures establish the fact that there is no life after death anterior to the resurrection life....

In the second place, the Scriptures show this resurrection to be immediate....

The third fact established in the Scriptures is, the resurrection is universal....

(4) What is the character of the resurrection state? We have already seen that philosophy can here give us no practical information. Light must come, if it can be had at all, from the Holy Scriptures. (Here follows an exposition of Jesus' teaching on the resurrection, in reply to the questions of the Sadducees)

What facts - now - touching the future life, has the Saviour substantially determined? 1. All hope of a future life rests upon the resurrection. 2. 'The dead' were already raised, as implied by Moses. 3. They shall die no more - and are therefore immortal. 4. Being children of the resurrection, they are the children of God in a new sense; and, as Paul puts it, are 'delivered from this bondage of corruption'. 5. They are equal unto the angels. 6. They all live to God. Will any one venture to say that sin or its penalty still remains?

.....

An atheist, denying the being of a God and the reality of a future life, is raised from the dead by the power of Almighty God, in whose fatherly presence he will stand. Will he any longer deny a future life? Will he any longer deny the existence of God? Can he be unaffected by a view of his tender compassion and infinite love? Can he fail to feel the glow of filial gratitude in return? Since the gracious Father, the loving Saviour, the glory of the just, and all the blessedness of purity and obedience, in contrast with the hideousness of vice and disobedience, shall then clearly appear, can any soul be unmoved?

When man is won unto loving obedience, sin is loathed and repented of; faith is devoutly cherished; the divine forgiveness is gratefully accepted; justice, having secured its primary claim, is abundantly satisfied; and the child of the great God is saved 'by the power of God'; 'by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ'; by the very influences which are the soul of the gospel; for which the name of Christ forever stands; making it, in verity, salvation by Christ." 1

No writers appear to defend any of the mediate positions which have been noted in previous decades, hence Quinby and Miner seem quite alone in their refusal to allow any unhappiness whatsoever in the future state. All the remaining utterances of this period allow for at least a small amount of future punishment.

#### Section B. Future Punishment Belief during the Period.

The first expression of belief in future punishment comes from the Rev. Adin Ballou, who, it will be recalled, was in his younger days a leading Restorationist. He sums up primitive Christianity doctrine, which he holds to be the correct doctrine, as follows:

"If I should reduce the pure primitive doctrine of Christianity concerning divine government, judgment retribution, and discipline, to definite propositions, it would stand nearly as follows:

1. God exercises, from and to eternity, over all beings, things, actions, and events a perfect government, in accordance with certain immutable laws of order.
2. God's government is exercised and administered largely through various secondary causes and mediatorial agencies, both impersonal and personal, of which he makes use according to his own sovereign pleasure.
3. In one way or another, sooner or later, God duly judges all beings, things, and actions, with reference to their fitness or unfitness to perfect order, and causes a suitable retribution to follow as the proper demonstration of such fitness or unfitness.
4. The divine judgment and retribution are designed not only to demonstrate the fitness or unfitness of beings, things, and actions to perfect order, but to uphold such order, correct disorder, and discipline the erring into true rectitude.
5. Jesus Christ is God's highest mediatorial agent for the administration of divine government, judgment, retribution, and discipline over the human race in this world and that which is to come, but with respect exclusively to their spiritual, religious, moral, rational, and social regeneration

and perfection.

6. Jesus Christ exercises his mediatorial administrative powers of divine government, judgment, retribution, and discipline, not with an arbitrary personal authority, nor by means of external rewards and punishments, nor by any kind of destructive physical force, but chiefly by means of his declared truth, his distinctive principles, his communicable Spirit, and his manifold moral forces, working in and through the minds of mankind.

7. Jesus Christ will certainly continue to reign in the exercise of these mediatorial powers, forces, and influences, till every human soul shall have been subdued unto him, and thus reconciled, to the Father;—who will thenceforth be spiritually 'all in all'.

The doctrine embodied in these propositions is taught in very positive language, some of which, however, is strongly figurative, and liable to be misunderstood without careful consideration of its structure, connections, and relations to fundamental principles elsewhere plainly declared. But with such consideration, minds of sound commonsense and decent spirituality may readily apprehend the essential ideas. The particulars in this doctrine most emphasized by Christ and his apostles are the following: That the divine government, providence, and judicial discipline are minute, searching, and complete over individuals, as well as general over communities, and universal over the vast whole; that they are strictly in accordance with the fitness of things; just, impartial, and equitable, according to works, knowledge, and real responsibility; that judgment and retribution are not instantaneous on transgression, nor uniformly diffused over the whole period of sinfulness, but experienced most intensely in crises, or days of judgment, analogous to harvest seasons following their seed times; that these judgment days occur to individuals, cities, and peoples more or less strikingly in the world, but that the most perfect and conclusive day, or age, of judgment, for all takes place after death in the future state; that all divine government, judgment, retribution and discipline aims at the maintenance, promotion, and complete final triumph of moral order; and that pure benevolence, and wisdom characterize all the divine dispensations, tempering judgments with mercies and ultimating all sufferings in a regenerate era of immortal blessedness for the human race.<sup>21</sup>

E. R. Sanborn, in an article on Punishment, contributes his opinion on the subject of future punishment at the close of his discussion, in these words:

"We cannot look upon death as effecting any other change than the dissolution of the material body. The character of the man is the same, only freed from the animal nature. But this freedom from materiality alone must give an immense impulsion onward to the deathless spirit. These real hells we have described must come from every wrong action after death as before,"

1. Primitive Christianity and its Corruptions. 1870 pp. 245-247

but they are the same halls of instruction and purification that we experience here. The Christ within can never cease to work. 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' We do not presume to be the prophet of the future. We only seek to discover in the nature which God has given man, in the laws of all action, the means of his ultimate purification and perfection in holiness; and to show that in the endless eternity mankind are freed from hell and brought into heaven, by the instruction which suffering imparts, and by the strength of the Christ-spirit within."

Another minister whose view is dominantly ethical is the Rev. S.

Crane. Closing his article on "Sin and Salvation", he remarks:

"Now let us inquire whether death can remove sin. Is it possible for death to save us from sin? If it is, it must be because it removes temptation, or removes us from the scene of temptation. Death is a physical event and cannot directly impart any moral power. No one has claimed, so far as we know, that it can. Death, however, if it can save from sin at all, must do so by removing temptation. If all temptation inheres in the flesh and the things of the flesh, then the dissolution of the body would be the end of temptation. Or, which amounts to the same thing, if death removes us from a world of temptation to a world in which there is no temptation, we shall then be free from it, and of course free from sin.

Does all temptation, then, end at death? We are not prepared to answer this question. We are not convinced that death is the absolute end of temptation. We are inclined, however, quite strongly to the opinion that it is. We are prone to think that a correct analysis will show that all temptation inheres in the flesh and the things of the flesh. The temptation to some of the grosser forms of sin, as those of intemperance and licentiousness, manifestly does, and we are inclined to think that the same is true of the temptation to all other forms. If so, then the death of the body is the end of temptation, and of course the end of sin. No act of sin can be committed in the spirit world, because there is no temptation there. But it does not follow that the sinful soul, after death, will not need gospel salvation.....We have shown that the removal of temptation is not a complete and perfect remedy for sin, because it does not affect the moral condition of the soul. We have shown that the gospel is such a remedy, for it effectually changes that condition. In the place of darkness it puts light; in the place of weakness, power. Hence, though death removes temptation and thus puts an end to sin as an act, it does not therefore take the place of gospel salvation. The man that is morally weak at death will be just as weak after death,....Put him under temptation, and he will sin just as soon as before.

.....

To Christ, therefore, and not to death, are we to look for salvation.  
1. Universalist Quarterly, July 1870, p. 305

He alone can save us in the moral sense of that term. Only by the power of his death and love can we be raised into his moral likeness. Death can no more give us the spirit and temper of Christ than it can change the relation of our souls to God. The process of moral salvation must ever be the same, so long as man is man. Truth for the mind and love for the heart must ever be the agents of their elevation and purification."<sup>1</sup>

The continuity of the future life with this is forcefully stressed by T. S. Lothrop, writing on "What we leave and what we keep at death." He treats the subject as follows:

"Shall we not find that the moral and spiritual laws that prevail over this earthly life are identical with those that reign over heavenly being? We shall. The knowledge and love, the nobleness and goodness that are good for the spirit in time are good for it in eternity. What passes as the highest and purest form of character in this temporal scene will be the current coin of excellence in the eternal. If it were otherwise, then the moral training we labor for here, would be good for nothing when we get there....

It was once thought that the epochs known to geology had their end and commencement in vast convulsions of nature; that between the extinction of one flora and fauna and the creation of another, breaks and spasms intervened....

This philosophy that broke up creation by interventions and wide gaps has long prevailed in theology; it has been held that death is anew creation, that there was a pause, a break between this life and the next, like the ending of one series and the beginning of another; and not a gradual blossoming and fruitage on the original stem of human nature. But it appears certain now that all moral growth and progress are perpetual, unbroken and unrelaxing, (and death is not an exception to this); not an abrupt incursion into a higher sphere. There is a natural gradation in putting on the enlarged qualities of spirit life.

The future is a continuation of the present. It is all one life and not another. It cannot be another, except in the sense that a man at forty has another experience from that which he had at twenty. What has been done is preliminary and important to what is to follow. What is behind reaches forward to the now, and what is now proceeds on into what is to be. Character is dependent upon what has gone before;... We see dimly and indistinctly into the hereafter, but we know that the present entails on us habits of virtue or of vice; that they have been forming in the past, and that they will be projected into the future. Life will commence there with just as much of good and of evil as we have taken up here.

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1. Universalist Quarterly, April, 1872, pp. 137-139

We have been trying to show that death works no moral change. But let it not be understood from what we have written that character is unchangeable hereafter. What we affirm is that, if we are filthy when we leave the material world we shall be filthy when we get into the spiritual; but we need not remain so. The holiness we have just before death, we shall have just after; but we shall be able to increase it then as now. The next life is not a mere appeal for correction and award. It is a fresh trial, a new opportunity; it is for reform, and it is for progress. Death is not an abrupt ending, but a better beginning; not a breaking off of consciousness, but a joining on to a higher being. Here life is in rudiment, in embryo, in preparation; there it will reach maturity, fulfilment, perfection. Here we have but a fragment of our being; there, in time, we shall have it complete. Here are rewards and punishments, and happiness is proportioned to desert; it will be so there. Here the spirit grows, and there it will not get beyond growth. The spirit must grow while it lives. When growth stops death begins. The end of growth is the end of life. Some believe that the spirit gains its full growth immediately as it passes to the other side of death. But if the spirit is to live, it requires not only that the relation be preserved between works and merit, but that the opportunity for advance be continued along that pathway which leads towards infinite perfection. Up to this the finite spirit must forever reach.\*1

Another writer whose name is not known to us gives utterance to a similar conviction in these words:

"We regard the future state as but a continuation of the present, with circumstances inconceivably more favorable for advancement, in all that is true and excellent. Nor is any force admissible, supposing the doctrine of Universalism to be true - not any different force than that which was employed in imparting the sentiments which we now believe, or in awakening our present feeling of regard for the objects of deepest love. We believe because we must - yet there is no compulsion in the case. We love because we must - yet we are not driven, but drawn by an influence which we would not resist if we could, and could not if we would."2

So also believes the Rev. G. S. Weaver, if we may judge from the following words:

"But even this individual work of regeneration is not usually a brief, but a long work. Few, if any are perfectly regenerated in this life. The most Christian people, after a life of devotion and faithful Christian work, feel, and feel truly, that the redeeming work of salvation is not

1. Universalist Quarterly, April 1873, pp. 209-214

2. Sufficient Provision, in the Universalist Quarterly, October, 1873, p. 481



fully accomplished in them. More is yet to be done. They are only disciples here learning the rudiments of spiritual life. They are apprentices in the flesh, taking their first lessons in the divine art of living unto God. They are tyros trying their hands feebly in the things of the spirit. The work in each individual, therefore, begins in the little and goes on to more, much, the whole. It is the leaven in the lump - the grain of mustard seed - in the beginning. And only the beginning is in the flesh, in any instance. What is begun below must be completed above. And then below there is only the first fruits of the harvest - the first drops of the shower. Only a few, comparatively, taste redeeming grace in the earth. The great mass of mankind live and die without any experimental knowledge of spiritual things. Their life is only embryonic. Grace must reach them, and their spiritual life begin after they pass from earth."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Manford himself, formerly an advocate of no future punishment, has changed his view. In his debate with the Rev. J. S. Sweeney he opens with the statement of the question under debate and the following words:

"The proposition.....reads thus -

The Bible teaches, that all who leave this world sinful will finally be reconciled to God, and saved.

It will be observed, that I do not affirm how or when this reconciliation is effected; only, 'that all who leave this world sinful will finally be reconciled to God, and saved.' I am fearful that all, or about all, the adult portion of mankind leave this world more or less sinful. The wisest and best will know their imperfections and shortcomings."

And, later in the debate, Manford says:

"As he makes a great ado because I cherish the hope that even those of my race who depart this life unregenerated will finally be purified by the grace of God, I want to know exactly where he stands on that subject."<sup>2</sup>

A fuller exposition of Mr. Manford's own views is probably given us in an unsigned article entitled "Probation and Reformation", in the issue of his Magazine for December, 1872.

"Now we hold that God being unchangeable, what he loves here, he will love hereafter, and what he loves, he will never abandon to hopeless ruin....If the 'goodness of God leadeth to repentance' in this life, why will it not do the same in the next life?....We learn in I Peter, 3:18,

1. Manford's Magazine, January, 1874, "Universalism as a Faith", p. 13
2. A Discussion on Universal Salvation, Manford and Sweeney, 1875, pp. 7-8,

that Christ after his crucifixion went and preached to spirits imprisoned in moral darkness, which surely he would not have done, had the work or repentance and obedience there, been impossible. The fact that he did thus preach, proves that the work of redemption is not confined to this earthly span, but that in the spirit world it is operative, and will continue until all are restored.

'Let the wicked forsake his way', is the standing invitation of heaven to every sinner no matter where or when. So long as the wicked continue, so long does this invitation appeal to them. It is not a mockery, - a delusion, but the invitation to such as may be wicked to any period. This being so, we see that the wicked can forsake his way in the next life, and come to God."<sup>1</sup>

Two more Universalist debaters of the middle west add their word for future punishment, during the course of the argument. The Rev. John Hughes, in debating with Elder Carpenter of the Church of Christ, says:

"I showed that in this life man is a free, intelligent, moral and responsible being, and that his responsibility necessitates the idea of his knowledge of the law, and his ability to obey it, which constitutes his moral agency. And I argued that death does nothing to change his nature in these respects, therefore his responsibility and moral agency will remain after death. And I showed that, inasmuch as the temptations that come through the body do much to hinder men here, that, they will be in a better state for moral improvement when freed from its appetites and passions."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Hanson of Chicago begins with a like sentence which shows that he allows future punishment, at the opening of his debate with the Rev. J. H. Lezier. His words are:

"It will be my delightful task to argue that death is but a step in man's progressive life. That the grave is only the low portico to a world where God's love continues just the same as here; where he will, as here, discipline his children, until he shall have eradicated sin and sorrow, and have caused holiness and happiness to prevail, finally and universally."<sup>3</sup>

We shall close this section with the most important expression of individual opinion of the period, in favor of future punishment. It is from John Coleman Adams, then a young man, and is one of thirteen essays by as many different ministers, on different topics, the whole published

1. pp. 538-9

2. Debate on the Destiny of the Wicked, between Carpenter and Hughes, 1875,

3. A Brief Debate on Universal Salvation and Endless Punishment. 1879, p. 7

justifiably, under the title, "The Latest Word in Universalism." (1878).

Probably the editor assigned the topics, and for reasons of his own, wisely gave to Adams the subject, "The Relation of this Life to the Next." The heart of his teaching follows:

"Universalism holds the present life to be the initial state of a moral order, whose progressive stages are to be endless....The conscious spirit holds the past life in relations to the present. It will be the bond between the present and the future life. From the earliest moment of separate existence, there is an indivisible unity in the experiences of a human soul. The past grows into the present; the present has its influence on the future.....The life of the soul is one life, here and hereafter.

.....

If we have learned the elements of grace and holy living in this life, we are fitted for advancement in that other. If we have neglected our opportunities here, if we have been careless or rebellious pupils, we must take a lower place there, and perfect ourselves in the rudiments. Until we do, we get no promotion; for it is one of the rules of this school of life, that no man can expect to have elevated experiences until his soul is fitted for them. Here and hereafter, we shall be advanced in knowledge and in happiness only according to our qualifications. And we must believe that the beginnings of the future life are shaped by what has been done in this life. A soul takes into the next world what it carries out of this. Character cannot be dropped like the body....

It seems probable, moreover, that the same methods of discipline and retribution will continue in the future as are employed here to restrain the sinful, and overthrow the defiant. The uniformity of God's moral government is our warrant for supposing that the means employed in this world to deter from sin, or to break down persistent evil by moral catastrophe continue beyond the deadline of the body. He who is under the bondage of sin is equally under the bondage of punishment for sin. And if we enter the next life in our sins, we enter it also in certain danger of their penalties. If the resistance of the will to the eternal moral law alienates the heart from God up to and beyond the gates of Death, the eternal laws of moral compensation will inflict suffering as long as this alienation lasts. Until the will consents to the divine order, there is no deliverance from the thralldom of retribution.....

Let us add, at this point, that the belief in the future punishment of sins is strengthened by the fact that this life affords so many instances of what may be called cumulative punishment. All the consequences of sin are not coincident with its commission. Some of them are frequently held back, gather but slowly, and befall the soul long after the beginnings

of the sin which caused them....The defaulter goes for years undetected. The adulterer may cover his tracks through many seasons. The hypocrite often keeps up the show of virtue so well that the world calls him saint. But after long immunity the tardy blow may fall in a way to bring down all the retributions at once. The calm and quiet days may be succeeded by a very cyclone of vengeance,,.....And in cases where death intervenes before the climax of the overthrow is reached, and when we feel sure that nothing but the removal of the offender from the earth has saved him from complete exposure and humiliation, who can repress the question whether death has interrupted the steady drift of events, or whether, in the invisible world, there be not in store, the same judgment of disclosure and downfall, the mortification of pride and the conquest of the stubborn will, as might have overtaken the evil-doer had he continued in the earth. It is true, to use words familiar in discussions of this matter, that we 'get our punishment as we go along'. But sometimes only in part....

If we turn now from the case of the impenitent, to that of the penitent dead, Universalism affirms that even they may expect such discipline and chastening experiences as contribute to moral progress. Though we go into the next life with humble, contrite hearts, we still have wrong tendencies which need restraint, imperfections to be corrected, and deficient affections to be developed. Now, whatsoever means God takes to remove these defects are remedial and disciplinary. They are like the means by which a dull scholar is urged forward. They are like the exercise which a physician prescribes for his patient. They hurt, but they help. All the efforts of souls but little trained in virtue may be of this nature, in the other life. We are not permitted to know. Revelation is silent upon this topic. But it seems no more than rational to suppose that the same plan by which God has seen fit to educate us into holiness in this life, should hold over into the next....And while discipline will be needful for all who enter the next world, as beings morally deficient, punishment will only be inflicted so far as old courses of sin have not yet worked out their results of penalty, or so far as a continuous disposition to wrong-doing calls for retribution. But when penitence has done its saving work, however low down in the scale of moral being it finds the soul, these penalties will cease, and the chastisements of God will only exercise the soul as helpful restorative discipline.

If we have not referred before to the helpful conditions which will make the future life by its very nature a redemptive state, it certainly is not because this thought is of slight importance....The body, though not the seat of sin, is a fruitful source of temptations, and a provocation to many of the grossest and most degraded acts of the mind....In a condition, therefore, in which these are removed, the soul will have a fuller opportunity to redeem itself and to break from the bondage to evil....This will be a great gain to the soul, - a negative gain, no doubt, - merely the removal of unfavorable surroundings. But nevertheless it will be a gain. It will be like the transfer of a sick man from a hurtful to a salubrious climate. The change does not cure him, but it puts him in surroundings which will. Death does not save the soul, but removes it to surroundings incalculably more

favorable to the work of grace than those of this earth....

Three things which are a heavy weight on the soul in its battle with evil, we shall leave behind us. We shall be free from the physical body, with all its tendencies to overcome the spirit with carnal practices. We shall be clear of the surroundings of the body, the earthly environment, which contains so much to distract the moral energies, and which thrusts its importunate demands between us and the ideals of conscience. And we shall be emancipated from much of that ignorance which now subtracts from the restraints and motives of the soul.

Moreover, if with this great change the soul passes into a realm where new surroundings impress the mind with the solemn reality of many things which had hitherto seemed unreal, is it unreasonable to expect that great moral changes will be effected in the character? Under the stimulus of the release from old temptations, and the access of light such as may be confidently expected in that glorified state, why may we not look on the change from this life to the next as a passage from night to dawn, in which the dormant or down-trodden spiritual energies will wake and begin the labors of holiness! There is that in the very nature of this rising of the soul into a higher life which suggests a wonderful upheaval of the spirit, the overthrow of its old prejudices, the cracking of the hard shell of habit, and the exposure of the mind to dazzling morallight. Under such an experience who can doubt that the soul will be quickened most powerfully? Who can doubt that the process of redemption, even of the stubborn, will be wonderfully hastened, and that the future state itself will be one of the sublimest of God's agencies for the conversion of men!"

#### Section C. The Call for a New Departure.

In 1872, just after the centenary year, the Rev. E. G. Brooks, pastor of a Universalist church in Philadelphia, published "Our New Departure," the aim and spirit of which may be adequately discovered from the following paragraphs.

"When I entered the ministry (1836), and for several years after, I found few with any clear and settled answer for this question, How? (How is Christ to save) - for the reason that it was generally held to be of only incidental importance....The very large proportion of our ministers and people have been much more occupied with the certainty than with the method of salvation. God and what He has purposed, rather than man and the conditions which he must fulfil, have constituted the burden of our thought; and while our pulpit....has been filled with argument in the direction of faith,

more than with unction in the direction of conversion and work, our people have been intelligent, conscientious, benevolent, morally responsible, comfortably confident that everything is to come out rightly at last, rather than pious, prayerful, spiritually vital, eagerly asking, 'Man and brethren, what shall we do?'

.....

There is no room for doubt as to what has come to be the predominant conviction of our body. It is that death, as such, works no moral change; that character is continuous, except as moral agencies modify it; and that salvation, being a change of character, is possible anywhere only as the result of such agencies, acting through faith and penitence, and inducing self-surrender. There was a period in our history when these were regarded as debatable positions. With the most of us, that period some time ago ceased;....

Is it said that there are those, - among them brethren honored and beloved, - with their equal rights in our fellowship, who do not yet accept these conclusions?....The question of what a church shall do is never <sup>or ought never to</sup> to be - a question of persons, but always of principles....

Hence alike the propriety and necessity of the New Departure herein contemplated. Many among us have already, individually, taken this departure; and the tone and methods of our Church are, in important respects, today very different from what they were twenty years ago. But notwithstanding these changes, and though the Ballouian philosophy has been generally discarded, we are still, as a church, mainly in the ruts of the Ballouian period as to methods and appeals. What is now required of us is that we leave these ruts, and, in a concerted and systematic direction of our labor, strike out into aims and efforts better corresponding with the existing state of our denominational thought:....

The good man disembodied, passing into the more manifest presence of God, loses none of his moral attributes; he is a good man there, precisely as he was a good man here - that is, in the activity of his own moral faculties; and because, carrying in himself the harvest of his prayers and mighty endeavors, he still loves and chooses to go forward in the good life. The bad man, just as certainly, passing on in like manner, loses none of his impiety, or sin in the passage; is inevitably the same bad man at his first moment of consciousness on the other side as he was at his last moment of consciousness here. He leaves his body behind, but nothing of what he morally was, because character is not of the body, but of the soul. Character, as the one actual thing in us, is to be changed, here or hereafter, only by our own moral choice. Death has no alchemy to touch it. True, death does strip off the flesh, from the suggestions and lusts of which character for evil to some extent here comes, and in the use of which character here manifests itself. It does introduce us into the new circumstances, amidst new, and probably mightier, influences; and precisely how these are to affect us, - of what awakenings and uplifting impulses and resolves they are to be the occasion, or what 'disenthralment of our spiritual powers', is thus to follow, no one can certainly say. It is reasonable to anticipate something



from the facts to be thus taken into account, though in respect to these things, he is the wisest man who dogmatizes least. But in itself, death is simply transition, with no transmuting moral efficacy. ....

....Our salvation, under God, is in our own hands. There is peril in carelessness and sin - not for time only, but beyond. Faith, penitence, and prayer, what we mean by spiritual culture and Christian life, are not merely things of a few days' concern to us here, to be with impunity balanced against the listlessness, or the imagined pleasures of a worldly or godless life, if we are willing to wait for death to put us right. Death cannot put us right....Choosing right in respect to God and the Saviour, every day of thoughtfulness and growing spirituality is so much gained towards that life and felicity which are to be perfected in heaven. Choosing wrong, every day of indifference, unbelief, or sin is a day of darkness, or hardening sensibility, or shrivelling capacity, or increasing spiritual captivity and death - stretching on, on, so long as our choice is perverse, or we fail to cry out for God, and to turn our faces towards Him. If, then, mere physical paralysis, destitution, blindness, or pain be a thing for us to shrink from ourselves, or demanding our effort for its relief and cure in others, how much more this darkness, poverty, and death of the soul! What penalties such a condition incurs, on the other side of death no less surely than here! What hazards are thus involved! What judgments invited! What losses sustained! What suffering chosen! And all this being granted, is any ministry or any church faithful, which, holding these convictions, declines to conduct its labors and frame its appeals accordingly?

.....

We have been, for many years, proceeding upon a false assumption. Contenting ourselves with a general, and often vigorous, enforcement of truth and duty by such sanctions as the present furnishes, we have quite extensively taken it for granted that any attempt to influence conduct by considerations drawn from its consequences, one way or another, in the future world, is somehow inconsistent with our fundamental principle that we must do right because it is right, and not from any mercenary motive. But what is there to justify this assumption? That we are to do right because it is right, is certain. Equally certain is it that to do right, or to abstain from doing wrong, solely because of reward or punishment anywhere, is, in either case, to be a hireling, rendering to God no accountable service. But are the consequences of action to be, therefore, put altogether out of the case? Why, then, does God so constantly appeal to them?....It is only in view of its consequences that the intrinsic nature of any course is to be best understood... Universalists have never been backward in proclaiming the certain earthly consequences of action, both of penalty and reward; and if any consequences may be legitimately appealed to, who not all? If consequences here, why not, with equal propriety, - it being granted that there are such, - consequences hereafter? Why should death be the line across which the appeal must not reach? or how can the whole case be fairly made up, either in favor of a Christian life, or against a godless one, except as all that both involve

is duly exhibited."<sup>1</sup>

This work is reviewed in the Universalist Quarterly for January, 1874, at which time T. B. Thayer was editor, and we know he was to all intents and purposes a believer in no future punishment. We do not know that he wrote this review, or approved it, but he published it, at least.

From this lengthy review, we cull the following remarks, which are illustrative of the spirit of the whole.

"We think Dr. Brooks attributes too exclusively to this 'Ballouian doctrine'...results which may be found also in the fields of Unitarian and Orthodox labor. Certainly religious coldness and indifference, the absence of 'spiritual vitality', prayerless believers, 'apathy and inanition', and dead societies, are not confined to those communities only where the doctrines of Hosea Ballou were taught. True, our author admits this, but still insists that 'with us the consideration which goes to the root of the matter, and explains what is saddest and most perplexing in this state of things is 'Universalists apprehended as simply a proclamation that all souls, at death, however they may have lived, pass at once to certain felicity, without regard to any conditions of faith, character, or effort here....'All our waste and desolate fields, so far as I know, are fields where this idea has reigned; and a large majority of our most thoughtful ministers and people have unquestionably come to believe that this desolation is to be directly charged to the account of the idea of certain immediate salvation at death without regard to conduct or character.'

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Now, without doubt this is Dr. Brooks' belief, but it is not ours;

1. pp. 14-25, passim

and we question this 'unquestionably' as to its being the belief of a large majority of our most thoughtful ministers and people....

We are not defending, we do not believe, the 'death and glory' system which Dr. Brooks affirms was the faith of the elder Ballou, and the preaching of the denomination for thirty years prior to 1845. The point we make is this - that, admitting his premise, his conclusions do not follow; that the doctrine in question is not wholly responsible for the evils charged upon it;....

However, be the directly producing cause of causes of our spiritual inanition what they may, the chapters....present a picture which challenges the careful study of our clergy and people; and certainly demands that, on some of the most important points of our teaching and work, and the preparation for and methods of work, we should take a New Departure."1.

In the issue of the Quarterly for October of the same year, 1874, we get a further hint as to the spirit in which Brooks' pleas was being received. The writer is the Rev. O. Perkins, and the subject, "Reward and Penalty in Religion".

"In the general and somewhat miscellaneous controversy inaugurated by the publication of 'Our New Departure', we notice there is 'nothing new' as it relates to at least one important question which is quite naturally and closely connected with the subject of most of this discussion, It seems that Christians of all denominations 'do err' in this, that they present religion as almost exclusively a matter of rewards and penalties. They proceed apparently upon the supposition that if they could only fix the time and place, the kind and the amount of punishment the sinful shall endure for his transgressions, and the nature and duration of the recompense the righteous shall receive for his virtues, then saintship would result, of course, as naturally as day and night result from the revolution of the earth....

.....

Yet we, believing God a Father, infinite in all perfections, go on discussing theories of reward and penalty, and ascribing vitalizing, saving efficacy to this theory or that with as much earnestness and emphasis as if we solemnly believed that all the sacred influences of Christianity inhered alone in its doctrines of reward and penalty. By all means let the child believe his Father is and always will be just; but do not endeavor to persuade him there is nothing more in his Father than a clear and cold embodiment of righteousness dispensing equitable judgments; nothing more, this year or next, in this world or in the world to come. This is law only

and not gospel.

.....

It will not answer to rely on special theories of retribution to accomplish that which it requires all the love as well as the justice of the Father, the grace and truth of Jesus, and the healthful influence of the Holy Spirit to perform. That theory of retribution, and of the entire purpose and operation of the government of God, which is most consonant with the most exalted, pure and perfect ideal of his Fatherhood, his justice and his love, is doubtless the most correct, and therefore the most healthful to believe. (He does not anywhere state what he believes this theory is.)

It is folly, then, if not worse, for members of the Universalist denomination to even think of a division of their numbers growing out of a difference of opinion on the subject of retribution. With regard to the great purpose of the government of God, with regard to the design and end of retribution, with regard to the scope and the success of Jesus' mission, we are one; ....To think therefore of unsettling these foundations, and of a change of our relations on a difference of faith respecting the time or place, or even the extent of retribution, which all alike believe ordained by infinite wisdom, controlled by changeless love, limited in duration, and designed only for good, is a kind of lunacy which will not long last nor far extend."<sup>1</sup>

#### Section D. The Final General Statement on Future Punishment.

"In the months of November, December, and January, 1877, and 78, the Monday Meetings of the Universalist Ministers, in Boston, discussed the question, 'What is the Universalist doctrine of future discipline?' On the 12th of November, Rev. Dr. G. T. Flanders, of Lowell, made the principal address, 'discussing it from the side of what is known as the Disciplinary or Future Punishment School,' though using the term discipline, or retribution, instead of punishment. He submitted some facts and statements in the following form:

'3. Intellectual and spiritual manifestations pertain only to man as a spirit, therefore whatever is gained or achieved by man in this world is the sole property of the spirit, and, of necessity, accompanies a man after death.

4. Therefore, character is not dependent upon the body for its existence, nor does a man lose his character by dying; therefore, character goes with a man after death.

5. Character is purely a moral, and not a physical formation.

1. pp. 454-461

formation.

6. Conditions of happiness or misery always attend upon character; therefore, conditions of happiness or misery attend a man after death.

7. Man being man after death, and therefore possessed of the same freedom of the will as here, the same sense of moral responsibility as here, will therefore be subject to discipline there as he is here.

.....

10. Evil inheres in the affections and in the will, and can only be eradicated by discipline.

11. Discipline founded upon eternal and immutable justice, there as here, will therefore be graduated to meet each individual case on its merits.

On the 18th, Dr. A. A. Miner, by appointment, made the principal address. He adverted briefly to the difference of meaning between the use of such terms as discipline and punishment by the fathers of our Church and by the theologians of other sects. Of future punishment in the sense meant by the Orthodox leaders of a former day, no Universalist, of a former of of the present day, would pretend to be an advocate.

He agreed that 'character is not a fleshly article, nor does man lose his character by dying.' 'Dr. Miner' affirmed his belief in retribution lasting as long as men remain wicked.'

November 28th, the Rev. I. M. Atwood made the principal address, submitting the following propositions:

'1. There is not any authoritative doctrine of the Universalist Church on the subject of Future Punishment. But,

2. The prevalent view of both clergy and people, the speaker thought, is this; that the relation of man's life after death to his life before is very intimate; that death, while it may introduce him to improved circumstances, does not affect any moral change; that therefore a man wicked and guilty immediately before death will be the same immediately after; that the moral nature of man, and the moral administration of God, are the same in both worlds; and that the only way for this wicked and guilty man to become cleansed and reconciled, is the way prescribed for such men here - conviction of sin, repentance, and reformation; that is, a new course in conformity with righteousness, which is to be persisted in until a righteous character has been established.

3. The speaker considered discipline to be the whole range of vicissitude through which God conducts the sinner up into goodness and perfection

It includes punishment, but embraces also the stimulants of hope and love.

4. How many human beings need such discipline? The great mass of those who have died would have required it if they had remained here. Since they continue to be the same beings, under the same moral administration, they must require it there. Otherwise it cannot be expected that they will ever be saved.

5. It is objected to this view that it does not take account of the helps that may intervene on the passage. But it does take account of all the helps of which we have any knowledge. If there are any of which we do not know, we cannot be censured for failing to take account of them. But the decisive fact is, that whatever the helps, man remaining man, he must get out of sin into righteousness by essentially the same process.

6. It is also objected that this view depends on analogy, which is untrustworthy in the case. But this objection confuses the fact of a future life with the conditions and employments of that life. Analogy cannot tell us whether we live after the dissolution of the body. For that we depend on revelation, intuition, and inference. But it is the proper field of analogical reasoning to make known to us what will be our probable condition and occupation there. So far as to our identity, however, and the logical conclusions from that fact, we do not depend on analogy and this is a very important part of the doctrine.

The speaker insisted that it is the duty of our ministers to meet the question frankly, and let the world know what they think will take place in the case of the vast multitude of mankind who leave this world in a state, not only of moral degradation, but of moral turpitude and guiltiness.'

The editor of the Universalist made the following statement of his views:

'We are accustomed to differ with some of our brethren in regard to 'future discipline' in this particular; though we do not, by any means, deem the Scriptures silent on the subject, we still hold that the question is substantially a philosophical one. Those who deny and those who affirm the continuance of punishment beyond the grave, both base their belief on reasons that would come under the head of philosophy. A reason against future punishment often takes this form: 'Sin depends for its incitement and cause on the temptations of the flesh, and may therefore be presumed to depart with the flesh.' Whether a valid or an invalid reason, it is philosophical and not a Scriptural one. A reason for future punishment often runs thus: 'Character can admit of no sudden change, and it is not determined by the bodily condition. It is therefore only by miracle that the bad at death can be made good immediately after death.' This may be a good or a poor argument; but it is of the nature of philosophy. Then it is by philosophical reasoning we come to the conclusion that in the Divine Government there is no such thing as penal infliction, arbitrary or mechanical award for either merit or demerit. The result is always a fruitage - a development



by inhering law. We do believe this to be Gospel truth; but our reasons for so believing are chiefly philosophical. The Scriptures seldom reveal things which reason is competent to discover.\*1

Dorchester having carried his point, does not tell us the issue of all this discussion, for which we turn to Eddy's *Universalism in America*\* and find that Eddy picks up the story just where Dorchester drops it.

"In 1878 the Universalist Ministers of Boston and vicinity, after a discussion continued many weeks at their Monday meetings, on the subject of future punishment, committed to Rev. Messrs. A. A. Miner, T. J. Sawyer, C. R. Moor, O. F. Safford, and A. St. John Chambre, the preparation of a statement which should embrace essential principles held in common by the Universalist preachers generally. The Committee's report, modified as the discussion progressed, finally took shape in the form here given. The vote on the motion for its adoption stood thirty-three in favor to two against. The negative votes did not denote objections to the points affirmed, but were based on different considerations. This approach to unanimity may be said, we think, to indicate the present attitude of the Universalist Church on the subject,....(1886)

"We the Universalist Ministers of Boston and vicinity, observing the widespread agitation in the religious world, with respect to the final destiny of our race, and more especially of those who die in impenitence and sin, and desirous that our views on this important subject should not be misunderstood, after much earnest thought and prayerful consideration, present the following, not by any means as a full statement of our faith, but as indicating its general character:

1. We reverently and devoutly accept the Holy Scriptures as containing a revelation of the character of God and of the eternal principles of his moral government.

2. As holiness and happiness are inseparably connected, so we believe that all sin is accompanied and followed by misery, it being a fixed principle in the divine government, that God renders to every man according to his works, so that 'though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.'

3. Guided by the express teachings of revelation, we recognize God not only as our King and Judge, but also as our gracious Father, who doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

4. We believe that divine justice, 'born of love and limited by love', primarily required 'love to God with all the soul' and to one's neighbor as one's self.' Till these requisitions are obeyed, justice administers such discipline, including both chastisement and instruction, and for as long

a period, as may be necessary to secure that obedience which it ever demands. Hence it never accepts hatred for love nor suffering for loyalty, but uniformly and forever preserves its aim.

5. We believe that the salvation Christ came to effect, is salvation from sin rather than from the punishment of sin, and that he must continue his work till he has put all enemies under his feet, that is, brought them to complete subjection to his law.

6. We believe that repentance and salvation are not limited to this life. Whenever and wherever the sinner truly turns to God, salvation will be found. God is 'the same yesterday, today and forever', and the obedience of his children is ever welcome to Him.

7. To limit the saving power of Christ to this present life, seems to us like limiting the Holy One of Israel; and when we consider how many millions lived and died before Christ came, and how many since, who not only never heard his name, but were ignorant of the one living God, we shudder at the thought that His infinite love should have made no provision for their welfare and left them to annihilation, or, what is worse, endless misery. And it is but little better with myriads born in Christian lands, whose opportunities have been so meagre that their endless damnation would be an act of such manifest injustice, as to be in the highest degree inconsistent with the benevolent character of God.

8. In respect to death we believe that however important it may be in removing manifold temptations and opening the way to a better life, and however like other great events it may profoundly influence man, it has no saving power. Salvation, secured in the willing mind by the agencies of divine truth, light and love, essentially represented in Christ, - whether effected here, or in the future life, - is salvation by Christ, and gives no warrant to the imputation to us of the 'death and glory' theory, alike repudiated by all.

9. Whatever differences in regard to the future may exist among us, none of us believe that the horizon of eternity will be relatively either largely or for a long time, overcast by the clouds of sin or punishment, and in coming into the enjoyment of salvation, whensoever that may be, all the elements of penitence, forgiveness, and regeneration are involved. Justice and mercy will then be seen to be entirely at one, and God be all in all.<sup>1</sup>

#### Section E. Significance of the Period.

The salient features of this most interesting period are as follows:

1. This was a fruitful period, with fresh thinking on the subject,

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1. Eddy, Vol. II, pp. 339-342

such as we have not seen in the past two decades.

2. The matter of future punishment was not settled, by any means, by the opening of this period, or during it. The Rev. I. M. Atwood spoke truly when he said that there was no doctrine of future punishment among the Universalists. The final paragraph of the statement of the Boston ministers begins: "Whatever differences in regard to the future may exist among us", and goes on to state the common ground of majority belief, leaving the differences aside. But these differences were real, and sufficient to prevent the formation of a doctrine out of the majority belief.

3. The advocates of no future punishment, Miner and Quinby, are obviously on the defensive, stating and trying to break down the future punishment arguments. They do not write with the tone of men who are sure of a large following.

Miner maintained very fine relations with the other ministers, as we note from his share in the making of the resolutions of the Boston ministers. However, his lectures were given during the very same year, and published within a few months after this group discussion, which issued in the resolutions. Having agreed to that statement as the opinion of the majority, having even helped to construct it, was he deliberately following it with a clear and full statement of his personal convictions, lest any imagine that he now had come to agree with the majority on this matter?

4. All the mediating positions disappear from the literature of this decade, and the latter is abundant. It implies that those who had been pleading the swift transformation of man in the new heavenly environment were unable to hold their ground.

5. The future punishment expressions are definitely and strongly in the majority, more so than in any previous period.

6. The future punishment views are confidently and boldly stated. The ring of assurance and consciousness of backing inheres in them. Adams, a younger man, dares to use words that the older men would never have used. Nay, he dares to say that even the penitent dead "may expect such discipline and chastening experiences as contribute to moral progress!" And Universalists had greatly doubted whether even the wicked need expect any discipline and chastening in the future life!

7. The majority opinion, as we can gather from Brooks, and from Adams, and from the Boston resolutions, was (1) that we enter the future in the same condition that we leave the present; (2) that the new and better environment has some effect on the soul; and (3) that there are only few and brief shadows of suffering or unhappiness in the future life, at most.

8. The pleas of Brooks, who was truly religious, yet kindly in his exposure of the defects of his loved church, were not well received in some quarters. His urgings that Universalists set themselves to really save and purify souls, and to give up Ballouian methods as well as theology and become evangelical in spirit, roused even threats of separation, from those who did not desire to be evangelical in utterances or in method. Perhaps Mr. Perkins takes what he heard more seriously than needful. At any rate, a sufficient number made such threats to alarm him. It is a "wilful minority", who do not believe in future punishment, and will not pretend they do.

9. The leaders of Universalism had now come over to belief in future punishment. At an earlier period, in the fifties, western Universalism

appeared to be radically no future punishment in its views, with one Restorationist.

10. The quotation from the Rev. Adin Ballou, forty years after the beginning of the controversy in which he led the Restorationist fight, shows that his whole phraseology is utterly different from that of all the other Universalists. He speaks a different tongue, and recalls the language, and also the theology, of the early Universalists, Murray and Winchester, and their successors. Ballou though he is, in blood and in name, he has not by 1870 imbibed the Hosea Ballou theology first promulgated in 1805. This is good proof of the conservatism of the Restorationists.

11. With the ending of the discussion at Boston, future punishment as an issue, or even a matter of interest, is dropped. It has never come to the forefront of thought in the succeeding years. This may very probably be due (1) to the fact that the majority had come to rest on a very satisfactory and moderate opinion on the matter, (2) the fact that further discussion could not eventuate in a doctrine on the matter, so long as Miner, notably, and quite a good many others in the background, still lived. The denomination could not afford to make a doctrine which would throw them out, and (3) the decreasing interest in future life and its conditions, among Universalists as well as among their contemporaries.

## CHAPTER V

## EXPRESSIONS OF OPINION ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT, 1880-1900

## Section A. Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

Only two echoes of the dying belief in no future punishment are found in this period. These are not dogmatic and clear-cut. One is from Sather Guthrie, in his autobiography, and reflects doubtless the tone of his preaching on this subject in western Ohio and in Indiana, during the course of a long ministry. We give two funeral sermons entire, and we quote from his recapitulations at the end of each.

"1. We aimed to show how are the dead raised up, and answered: By the spirit and power of Almighty God; and that the physical change consists in the higher nature taking leave of the earth body and being clothed upon with the heavenly body. The fact of the change of worlds argues a change of bodies. From God, as the great substratum, proceeds matter and mind; and each, coming from him, is indestructible....

We have also argued that the great moral and spiritual changes are as great as the change from a terrestrial to a celestial body; that Paul conceived the idea that, 'As is the earthly, so also are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are they that are heavenly.' The point he makes is that while we are in the earth life we will act like they do on the earth; and when in the heavenly, we will act like they do in heaven.

.....

3. By a change of worlds we leave the body of lust and passion behind. Christ will deliver us from the body of this death. We believe that a spiritual being in a spiritual body and in the spirit world will assimilate the divine qualities and be free from the law of sin and death".

The following is from a funeral sermon preached in 1909:

"Once more Christ closed his argument by the statement of a great moral and spiritual change; and Paul said, 'As is the earth such are those that are earthy and as the heavenly such are those that are heavenly'.

The idea stands out predominant that while we are in the earth life, we will act like they do in earth, but when in heaven we will act like they do in heaven. 'So then the sum of all there is revealed to us of the



future life is, that it is a spiritual, heavenly, angelic, immortal, incorruptible, glorious state, where death, decay and pain and sorrow cannot enter, but where there is one upward sweep of approximation toward the Divinity, forever.'<sup>1</sup>

Another advocate of the older views seems to have been the Rev.S.

A. Gardner, who writes as follows:

"God's final victory will be the most glorious and most complete thing in the universe. Men will not be pulled or driven into the kingdom of holiness. There will be no slaves in paradise, but the hardest and most sinful propensities of human nature will be melted and remoulded in the full blaze of divine love. I well remember the day when we marched into fallen Vicksburg, where a large Confederate army was captured. Yet, it was not captured. Prisoners are not captured simply because compelled by a superior force to lay down their arms. The real victory over the rebels came afterwards, when we began to feed their famishing, and to administer restoratives to their sick. They had not expected this. Their hearts were touched. Their eyes filled with tears; while many of them declared they would never renew hostilities against the federal government. This is the philosophy of salvation. Not man's power to do evil, but his disposition to do evil must be overcome, ere he can have any part in the heavenly life.

Another thing which I well remember is this: At the close of the war, when I started for home, I left all my military accoutrements behind. I was to begin a new kind of life in which none of these things would be needed. Thus, at death, I expect a like change will be made. The trappings of materialism, the weapons of corporal warfare, the ugly instruments of fleshhood, can have no place in a purely spiritual existence. The dying Saint Paul was conscious that he had fought a good fight; he was equally certain that his fighting was finished. Some of us have fought a pretty bad fight, but whether good or bad, death will close the battle scene and we shall enter upon a career of peace. All future triumphs must be brought to us by the white winged messenger. Victories will still await our aspiring souls, and perfection will still be unattained, but, thank the Good Father, we shall have no more conflicts with blood and iron. This, too, is the philosophy of salvation. The soul, for the first time, can be gotten at. It will be like a struggling plant, which had been covered over with wood or stone. The obstruction removed, the plant shoots into the sunlight, offering to smiling heaven a thank-token of bloom and fruit.

'Bastard wheat, or tares', says Dr. Adam Clarke, 'may become good wheat by being transplanted to a better soil.' He may not know it, but he is herein giving us the very argument which supports the hope of universal salvation.

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1. Life and Works of Rev. Thomas S. Guthrie, D. D. written by himself. 1912. pp. 101-2, 120-121

The black and red pines of Japan are colored according to the soil where they grow. In clean, sandy ground they are red, while in black ground trees of the same kind are black. This, too, is the philosophy of salvation. When transplanted from the present world to another, we shall find ourselves more favorably situated, both as to soil and climate. We shall partake of the purity which surrounds us. Here is our winter; there will be our summer.

.....

When a meteor strikes earth's atmosphere it is colder than a block of ice, but the next moment it is all ablaze - changed in the twinkling of an eye. This, too, is the philosophy of salvation. When a soul departs from the wintry regions of sin and enters the life-giving atmosphere of true spirituality, may not the change it undergoes be exceedingly great? Will not death introduce us to surroundings that shall be favorable to the welfare of the soul? To think otherwise is to impugn the love, wisdom and power of God.

Moore says:

'Like the stained web that whitens in the sun,  
Grow pure by being purely shone upon.'

This, too, is the philosophy of salvation. If the countenance of the Most High, the face of eternal truth, and the glorified appearance of the saints, are not to shine upon a darkened soul and produce some beneficent effect, what is the meaning of the 'power of good influences'?

How shall we interpret the conversion of the 'chief of sinners', Saul of Tarsus? It has been called miraculous; it proved to be an irresistible influence of some sort. Was such influence, whatever its origin or nature, entirely exhausted on that occasion? In God's own chosen time, may it not come to each and all? To judge otherwise is to regard Jehovah as being miraculously partial in the treatment of his children."<sup>1</sup>

#### Section B. Future Punishment Belief during the Period.

The first statement which comes to our notice during this period is from William F. Crispin, who, out of "several years' travel for denominational institutions", wrote a work concerned largely with the methods and administration of the Universalist Church, embodying, however, brief doctrinal statements, from which we quote:

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1. Latest Interpretations, 1886, pp. 203-205

### "Punishment after Death.

Universalism has been falsely charged with denying after-death punishment. Universalism neither denies nor affirms after-death punishment. There are a few Universalists who believe that consciousness is limited to our fleshly existence. And some who have charged certain of the Ballou Universalists with upholding what is called the 'death and glory' theory, yet those who seem to have known most intimately the views of that class, usually disclaim so bald a statement of their belief. We are assured of their belief in some sort of future discipline, which they rightly construe as one phase of punishment after death - namely, that failure to develop our religious faculties here, incurs loss of happiness there. We think that at the present day, there are very few, if any of our clergy, who proclaim disbelief in punishment after death, though such views are held by some of the laity. On the other hand, some of the early preachers of Universalism believed in long ages of future punishment for the wicked, but it is perhaps true that this view is not held by any clergyman in fellowship with our church at the present day.

Speaking for ourself, alone, and yet no doubt reflecting the opinion of the great majority of our members, we regard the 'death and glory' theory, whether held by many, or by few, as unscriptural, unreasonable, unjust and immoral in its tendency. The wilful murderer, himself cut off in the act, will carry with him, into the spirit world, his memory and his conscience, to plague and torment him so long as God in His wisdom finds it to be for the good of the offender. This punishment will be both just and merciful; it is never vindictive, and it cannot be endless. But that such a wicked act should be an open door to a higher life, free from all pain or sorrow, and which, had the culprit remained here to old age, and fully penitent, would have caused him compunction of conscience so long as he lived, does not seem to accord with the scripture which says, 'God will by no means clear the guilty', nor does it commend itself to our mind as carrying with it that moral obligation and binding force, impelling to duty, which we find everywhere else emphasized and amplified, by precepts of the Bible, by man's experience, and by the deductions of sound reason. The assurance that comes to us from all these sources which throw light on the government of God, is, that if we violate His laws, punishment follows, relentlessly, not always immediately, and all at once, but often extending through a long course of time, and yet with certainty. Hence to say that death, as an accident, or as a natural event, furnishes sufficient cause for God to hold one of His laws in abeyance, we find no warrant in His Word, nor elsewhere, for believing. Besides salvation is a matter of growth - 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear', is God's order in the spirit realm as in the evolutions of nature. If the religious or spiritual life be not begun here, it must begin there; and we are to 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.' There can be no sudden unfolding of these powers, by reason of death, or anything else, to enable us to bask, at once, in the exquisite joys of the redeemed, in the world to come. Success in the life of the soul, like success in every other department of our

lives, must be won; it is never thrust upon us suddenly, unmerited, here, or hereafter. But the toil and struggle to win the goal, the pearl of great price, will be amply rewarded and our joys will increase as the struggle is continued. A never-ending growth in the life of the soul seems 'our destined end and way.' An everlasting development of our powers, forever growing toward the perfections of God, is the glorious hope which is revealed for all God's intelligent creatures.

#### Nature and Office of Punishment.

Although Universalism neither affirms nor denies after-death punishment, yet it does affirm with all the force it can command, the certainty of just punishment for all sin. And it also asserts that punishment is remedial, and that it will continue so long as sin continues, or so long as the good of man requires it...."<sup>1</sup>

There was published during these years a series of small volumes called "Manuals of Faith and Duty", written by different Universalist ministers, with a view to teaching the doctrines and the living practice of Universalism constructively and simply. The Rev. George S. Weaver, D. D. in No. IX of the series, on "Heaven", gives the clearest statement of future punishment to be found anywhere in the series. He says:

"What of the wicked?

'What of the wicked who up to death had loved evil?' ask a multitude of anxious souls. And well they may; for 'What of the wicked?' is a great question in all worlds. That there is no good in wickedness, but evil and only evil, is one of the great facts of experience forced upon us. 'There is no peace to the wicked', is a statement of an ancient Scripture which all the wicked have found out to be true. Now, 'What of them in the over-the-river world?' is the question. They go there in a bad state of mind, - go there in opposition to God and His holy laws and ways of life; what of them? They go there as they are, with the paralysis of wickedness upon them, with the evil of wickedness in them. The thing about wickedness which has enticed them has been its secretness, its supposed smartness, its anticipated profitableness. But over there these guises put upon it by our fleshly and animal relations are left behind. Men go there to be seen and known as they are. The spirit there has no hiding place in flesh. It may be a burning ordeal for a while for bad men to know that their badness is visible to all, and that they are estimated at their true value by all; but

1. Universalism and the Problems of the Universalist Church, 1888, pp. 33-36

it will be a profitable discipline which will teach them the unprofitableness of wickedness and the need of better things to live for. Among their first lessons will be the terrible mistakenness of their earth-life in supposing that there is good in evil. But this lesson will be pressed with vigor, for things there go for their reality and not for their pretension. The falsities of earth have a poor show there; the truth and the right press with vigor on. The will is free there as here; but the prevalence of truth, reality, and rightness makes an atmosphere which punishes wickedness out of mind and out of life.

#### The Intermediate State and Judgment.

The Roman Catholic Church insists upon an intermediate state between death and heaven and hell - a purgatory, in which wickedness shall be purged out of men so far as possible, and which shall end in sending men either to heaven or hell as their final destiny. But this, in its coarseness and failure, so far as the lost are concerned, is its chief objection. The first experience in the after-death world - the initiatory experience - must be considered intermediate and preparatory to later attainments. With all, except the most thoroughly Christian, the early period of the heavenly life must be disciplinary, instructive, - a school preparatory to the life to be attained later on. Peter called the most disobedient of the ancient times 'spirits in prison' to whom Christ preached his gospel after He went to that world. Of course He preached to them for their improvement, as Peter says: 'that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, and live according to God in the spirit'. In other words, Christ's preaching there had the same object that it did here - the instruction and reformation of men. The earlier periods of the after-death life must be largely missionary periods, as the great majority of those who go there are pagans, sinners, and infants. Instruction is the first work over there. The gospel is the book of life for that world. Christians are missionaries carrying the light and law and love of God to the multitudes who have not known Him. And many Christians have so much to learn of the fundamental principles of the gospel, after they get over there, that they will be learners for a while before they can go as lights to the benighted. Many Christians will have to tarry awhile at Jerusalem for training in the gospel life. Yes, the early life on the other side may well be called 'intermediate', as it is preparatory to the light and joy of heaven. Christ as the Light has an immense work to do in that world to illuminate the souls of those who go there in darkness; and his Church will find ample use for all its power along the borderland of the heavenly world. Yet, to go there is 'gain,' so much of earth is left behind, so much of heavenly opportunity is gained."<sup>1</sup>

Our next writer is the Rev. Marion D. Shutter, D. D. whose sermons on Universalism entitled "Justice and Mercy" were preached in 1890-93 from

l. pp. 51-55

the same pulpit from which he is still (1925) preaching, the Church of the Redeemer, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Dr. Shutter has little to say about future punishment, but that little is forcefully uttered. He seems not to appreciate how justly people have come by their conceptions of the teaching of the Universalist Church concerning the future. Let us listen:

"May I pause here for a moment, to say again what I have said so often, and what, I fear, must be said thousands of times more, that,

1. No other churches believe so firmly, so unequivocally in punishment for sin as does this church! We believe that it is personal; that it belongs to the individual, in such a sense that no vicarious arrangement can be made for its removal. 'Every man must bear his own burden.' The only way to escape is to escape from sin. To this the influence of Christ may lead, not as substitute, but as example, teacher, inspiration,

2. That it extends, if necessary, into the next world.

3. That it lasts, as long as sin lasts.

4. That its object in the perfect government of God is remedial and not retaliatory, ~~to~~ remove and not to perpetuate evil.

Deal with us fairly. I do not ask any one to accept this view; I only ask that, in speaking of the utterances that go forth from this pulpit, they be not misrepresented. Time after time, I have been compelled to hear the miserable slander, 'O, you preach that a man may do anything he likes, and go to heaven without suffering for it! If I ever preached such an idiotic doctrine as that may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth and my right hand forget her cunning! I fling the wretched falsehood back into the faces of the ignorant or malicious traducers who made it. 'O you open the doors indiscriminately and sweep the gold with the dross into Paradise!' Never! It is not we who send the reeking murderer directly from the gallows to glory. We insist that the dross shall be purged away, we insist upon the refiner's fire. 'Our God is a consuming fire', who will burn the evil till it is removed. Not till the last sin has been forsaken, not until the last evil thought and desire have died, will the soul's happiness be complete. But after sinners have passed through the fires of repentance and purification, who then would deny them paradise?"

"The growth of the soul to the full measure of its new stature will be gradual. A moment may suffice for the beginning; but there is no process by which a complete transformation of character can be ~~successfully~~ effected. It cannot be done before one comes to the deathbed; it cannot be done upon the deathbed, As we leave this life we enter that which lies



beyond. The methods by which character is changed and uplifted must be very much the same there as here - slow and progressive. We believe, indeed, that entire deliverance from the power of sin will at last be effected; but there as here we must pass through the refining and purifying fires of God's consuming love. It is very true that no ceremony performed over a dying man will fit him for the kingdom of God; neither will a 'drop of blood applied to his soul' - whatever that may mean. It is not in order for anyone to criticize 'extreme unction' who believes that by any other sort of legerdemain the blackness of human iniquity may be instantaneously converted into the whiteness of heaven."

"I hear it said sometimes: 'O, Mr. Shutter, preaches that you may do as you like, and there is no punishment.' It is surprising how people who never hear me preach know so much better than I do what I preach. It is hardly excusable that the doctrines of this church should be so grossly misunderstood, and misrepresented. People have an idea of what we teach, or ought to teach, and will not have it modified by anything we can say....People seem to have it down in black and white that we do not believe in punishment, and they will stick to it if it kills them. I have said ten thousand times that every evil thought, every unkind word, every unmanly deed, will bring, here or hereafter, its just and equitable penalty."

At the World's Fair, in Chicago, 1893, the Universalist Church held sessions, and addresses were made by the leaders of thought in the denomination at that time. A good insight into the teaching of the leading Universalists on future punishment may be had by attending to these addresses, planned to give all who would attend a correct understanding of Universalism.

The Rev. Stephen Crane, D. D. says:

"Death is of the body not of the spirit....Hence it is no crisis in the life of the spirit. It is no turning point in the soul's career. It does not fix its destiny for good or ill,

.....

Death gives freedom to many a flesh-bound soul. What would a man rotten with appetite and passion become if he could not die? How pitiable and revolting is the figure of an aged libertine and sensualist! Nature opens the grave for these bodies that their souls may have the opportunities of another life. Death gives no moral strength or purity, but it gives freedom to moral weakness. It breaks the chain that binds the sinful soul to a corrupt body. Like all the orderings of God, therefore, death is on the

side of the righteous and not of the unrighteous choice."<sup>1</sup>

President Elmer H. Capen, D. D. in an address entitled, "Punishment Disciplinary", says:

"Life is contingent. Death finds the soul to be just what life has made it. We enter upon the life that lies beyond the grave, in the nature of things it cannot be otherwise, with the character we have made for ourselves here.

....Neither is there denial to be made of the force of circumstances upon the shape and color which the soul takes on, The life of the pagan savage cannot yield the fruit of the life of the civilized Christian. The life of a child, born in the slums, compelled to breathe from its birth the poisonous atmosphere of iniquity, though it may resist temptation and even acquire a heavenly beauty, cannot be what it would have been under more favorable surroundings. Hence it is not wise to lay too much stress on the present attainment. We cannot tell what effects will be wrought in the transformation of the soul by its transference from earthly conditions, with their temptations, hindrances, limitations and obscurities, to conditions which we are wont to call heavenly, with all the light and glory by which, in our own optimistic moods, we believe them to be attended. We turn with confidence and comfort to the almost unmistakable intimations of the Christian Scriptures that the new life of the soul in the new realm that lies beyond the grave, will be attended by a great gain in all the higher qualities of spiritual power for which we never cease to long with a great longing. We rise out of every deep of humiliation and despondency, by recalling, that here we see through a glass darkly, but there we shall see face to face; that now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known; that now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. This is the Universalist's great hope, his profound and indubitable conviction, that every experience of human life, whether in time or eternity, will be somehow inwrought into the mysterious fabric of the soul's achievement until its perfection shall be secured. He unfalteringly expects, through chastening, suffering, sacrifice, illustrative example, and holy teachings, for himself and all mankind, the attainment of the perfected and ideal manhood, and he awaits, with serene and lofty courage, the

"One far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves."<sup>2</sup>

The Rev. Charles Ellwood Nash, D. D. says in his address:

"Reflect, now, that in a spiritual world it is inevitable that heaven and hell should be contiguous; that no part of the universe or creature in it can be shut off from the divine omnipresence; that, thus

1. The Columbian Congress of the Universalist Church, 1893, pp. 3,8
2. Ibid, pp. 24-5

beset by God and by the eloquence of the contrast between his own sad plight and the serene fortunes of the blessed, he cannot but cry out against his chains and long for emancipation; that such a cry is at least quasi repentance, and such longing is the aspiration which lifts by its exercise - and what is there, except an arbitrary and mechanical 'scheme', impossible to the thought of a being of infinite attributes, which can prevent this new and truer knowledge, this nobler desire, from effecting their natural transmutations of character in the eternity beyond the grave, as well as in the eternity this side the grave?"<sup>1</sup>

And in harmony with these thinkers is the Rev. Charles H. Eaton, D. D. who spoke on "The Nature of Salvation". As regards the future, his words are these:

"Salvation, the Universalist declares, is not confined to this life. Repentance is the door of salvation. Repentance, however, is possible on this or the other side of the line of death. Death has no significance whatever so far as the essential processes of salvation are concerned. The resurrection must bring a clearer vision, a keener sensitiveness to the divine approval or disapproval. Standing in the light of the new day, our sins will be seen in their true relation. Interpretations will be given of the struggles, the victories and defeats of life. But it is true in a sense that 'as death leaves us so the resurrection will find us'. Passing the narrow line which separates life and death, our thought, affection and will, will remain the same; the character we have formed will undergo no change. As we lay down the burdens of earth, we take up the obligations of heaven. Relieved of the body of flesh, its weaknesses and the temptations that inhere in it, but, notwithstanding, the same human beings that walked the ways of earth. Not only does the soul remain the same, subject to the impulses, the restraints, the hopes and opportunities of the law of God, but everywhere in this life and every other life, we are under the dominion of the same power and love. Wherever and whenever a soul turns to God, forgiveness and help will be granted. The sun shines at one end of the covered bridge we call death. Does it not shine at the other end as well?....There can be no salvation without repentance. But there is no reason in philosophy or revelation for supposing that the opportunity to repent is confined to the short period of earthly life. On the contrary, there is every reason for believing that God will yearn over his children until he awakens in them an answering affection. He will persuade and punish in the future life as in this until the last sinner gropes his way from 'outer darkness into day.'"<sup>2</sup>

The last expression of opinion we find in this period is from the Rev. Henry R. Rose, D. D., then just entering his years of ministry.

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1. Ibid. pp. 48-9

2. Ibid. pp. 203-4

In a series of sermons preached in 1894, and afterwards published we find some new ideas as to the future conditions. His words are:

"In a word, we shall be in the other life just what we were in this life, minus the influences and habits of the corporeal body. If it were possible to tell just how much of our thinking and feeling and doing were due to our body, we would be able to know what our thoughts and feelings and volitions would be apart from this fleshly tabernacle. We may be sure that 'when we go from this world, we shall be released from ten thousand things that belong to our physical state, and that tend to hinder our spiritual development,' but we may be equally sure that we will retain our personality, and every trait and habit of a spiritual kind.

.....

Not only does this theory, that the coming life is a continuation of the present life, abolish the dogma that heaven and hell are places over there; it also makes us see that it is impossible that the next life is one of perfect bliss or unalloyed misery. It will be a life of mixed experiences just as this life is. It is very common to say that

'Heaven is the land where troubles cease,  
Where toils and tears are o'er;  
The blissful clime of rest and peace;  
Where cares distract no more;  
And not the shadow of distress  
Dims its unsullied blessedness.'

This doctrine is very common and very delightful, but can it be true? Can an existence where human spirits are in all grades of development be absolutely and unqualifiedly blissful? Can a life where there may be wilful disobedience of the highest, and where there is the possibility of remorse for a sinful past, be aught than a world of mingled joy and sadness? If we are the beings there that we are here; if our characters are the same after death as before; if our sympathy grows tenderer and deeper as we advance in the spiritual realm, I do not see how we can help suffering at times over there as we do here.

.....

It stands to reason that in a life the counterpart of this, where the endeavor after personal righteousness must require struggle, and where labor in behalf of the righteousness of others must demand self-sacrifice, the state of the inhabitants will be that of mingled joy and sorrow, and this must last until all souls have reached the perfection of God....

If one soul survives the grave, all souls survive. They are all there; all of God's offspring. Yes, the good and the bad are there together,

mingled as they were here; and the same processes of development are there going on which are here lifting the race higher and yet higher in goodness. The bad are becoming good; the good are becoming better; and all are growing toward the best. God, the loving Father, as he looks on the two worlds, sees all the children that ever sprang forth from him; sees them coming slowly up to the standard he erected before they were born; sees the time when they shall be what he intended; and hears afar the song of praise that shall roll in upon his heart when the Race has reached Maturity!"<sup>1</sup>

### Section C. The New Profession of Faith.

Mr. Crispin, in the work above quoted from, published in 1888, gives us a paragraph which tells exactly what led up to the new Profession of Faith. His testimony concurs with that of all the living men who attended conventions in those years. He says:

"This article second of this Profession further says that God is 'revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

As to the word 'restore', there are many among us who think this word does not fitly express the Universalist belief.' Since man was never perfect, and hence never fell from a state of purity equivalent to that of the saved in the spirit world, it is thought by this class that a better and more lucid statement would be secured by changing the word 'restore' for 'save' or 'bring', or some equivalent expression, making the sentence read: 'Who will finally 'save' all mankind', or, 'Who will 'bring' all mankind to holiness and happiness.' Others think the present statement of belief is scriptural, and, although there seems a necessity to explain the language, to make it express clearly their belief; yet their reverence for this unique document, as a whole, forbids that they should favor the change. It is probably safe to say that the tendency is toward a change, but there is no haste. Lack of willingness to change does not appear to stand in the way, so much as the difficulty there is in remodelling, or recasting the Profession of Faith, in such a way as to meet the concurrence of the mass of believers. And notwithstanding the discussion has been continued through a series of years in the press and in the General Convention, an excellent spirit prevails; and there is probably no other denomination today, in which there is so much unanimity of belief; for it does not appear from these debates that there is any marked difference in belief; but the difference is rather in the manner of statement than otherwise."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Miner was one of the enemies of the word 'restore', but not

1. Good Sense in Religion, Rose. 1894, pp. 224-235

2. Universalism and the Problems of the Universalist Church, Crispin, pp. 21-2

the only one. Different men had different substitute words and phrases, but none could get a majority vote. Meanwhile a minority pleaded the sanctity of the Winchester Profession, held by Universalists since its creation in 1805. Finally, in 1899, it was decided to leave the Winchester Profession standing unaltered, as a historic profession, and to form a new statement of faith in new words. This resulted in the Profession of Faith which is now naturally superseding the Winchester Profession in the minds of men. It runs as follows:

"We believe in

1. The Universal Fatherhood of God
  2. The spiritual authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ
  3. The trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation  
from God
  4. The certainty of just retribution for sin
  5. The final harmony of all souls with God,
- Though neither this nor any other precise form of words shall be required as a condition of membership."

In this statement of belief, punishment is stated to be just, and certain, while the final harmony of all souls with God implies with sufficient clearness that the punishment is remedial in its effect.

By this time, Universalists had generally perceived that what is called loosely 'punishment', is, to speak more accurately, the inevitable consequences of violations of law, natural, or social. Such punishment is certain, as certain as the movement of the earth on its axis. Such



punishment is called just, because no element of personal vindictiveness enters in, presumably. It is at least impartial, and impersonal.

Briefly, then, Universalists were simply stating in very simple and modern language the conviction they had held for most of the nineteenth century, led by the mind of Ballou,- the conviction that punishment is consequential in its nature, remedial in its purpose and effect. Like Ballou again, they would not admit, in their creed, that any of such punishment might be in the future!

They probably could not have shaped any simple statement of future punishment which would have been accepted by our ministers and people, had they tried.

#### Section D. The Significance of this Period.

The salient facts brought out in the writings and doings of this twenty years are as follows:

1. The question of futurepunishment was retreating from view. Each year it was less and less a subject on which to talk, or to write. Attention was turning in other directions.

2. In the new Profession of Faith, the matter of future punishment was sidestepped. It had not been previously settled, and by that time too few people cared to make any effort to settle it, even on the supposition that they could have succeeded, by making such effort.

3. Belief in no future punishment still exists, finding only occasional literary expression.

## CHAPTER VI

## EXPRESSIONS OF OPINION ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT, 1900-1925

## Section A. Future Punishment Belief during the Period.

Most of the available material, in fact, most of the existent material, for this period, is in the form of tracts, or in the pages of the Universalist Leader. The quotations here given do not cover all that has been said or written on the subject in this quarter century, but they are amply sufficient to show the general drift of statement, which is now uniform.

In a pamphlet entitled, "What is Universalism", by the Rev. Frederick A. Bisbee, D. D. he says:

"It is believed that we go into the next life exactly as we leave this. If we have used our opportunities here, we enter there rejoicing in the reward of our possessions; if we have wasted our opportunities here, we enter there with shame and sorrow and suffering for our lack, that we can no longer hide."

"And so it is held, in Universalism, that every sin will be punished, and that punishment will be continued here and hereafter, as long as is necessary to accomplish the reformation of the sinner."<sup>1</sup>

From a pamphlet entitled, "Bible Universalism", by Pullman and Hall, we take the following sentence as the only one having reference to future punishment.

"You believe that, under God's moral discipline, here and hereafter, all souls will grow better until every soul shall, of its own free choice, do what it ought."<sup>2</sup>

In another pamphlet, entitled, "What is Universalism?"<sup>2</sup> by Dr. Willard

1. pp. 8-9

2. p. 8

C. Silleck, he says:

"that human imperfection, implying ignorance and sin, keeps us all from entering fully into the blessings of the spiritual life which he helps us gradually to attain unto; that he must reign increasingly 'until we all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ'; that such spiritual attainment is the essential salvation and the eternal destiny of the human soul; that immortality is simply the pledge that the great process will be carried on forever; and that, here or there, at last, far off, the whole race of man 'shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.'"

An echo of the pleas of the mediating party of years ago is found in a sermon of the Rev. Harry A. Hersey, in pamphlet form, entitled, "Universalist Belief in Hell". In the whole sermon, the only words referring to the future are these:

"We see men born in iniquitous homes, drunk from birth, low, vile, corrupt, suddenly (and it is at once the glory of man and glory of God that we are capable of this) and at once turn over a new leaf and live sober and creditable Christian lives. If God can do that here, in a man who has never before known a sober or decent moment, wringed down by a besotted and diseased body, what can He not do in all eternity with Jesus Christ and all the holy angels to help Him, and working upon a soul no longer entombed in a body of death?"<sup>1</sup>

Social solidarity as a factor in the future as well as here, is stressed by the Rev. Arthur W. Gross, in a pamphlet on "The Universalist Church, its doctrine."

"The element of reality greatly needs to be injected, or rather restored, to the whole conception of rewards and punishments. The orthodox brimstone hell has become a joke. The present danger is that the inevitable consequences that follow wrong doing may likewise be regarded as jokes, and heaven a joke along with it....."

'He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. He that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap everlasting life'. That law is true both in the here and in the hereafter. 'If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.'

There is still need, however, for a real doctrine of human destiny. No man can wisely use the present who does not take the future into his time-view. The architect has the complete structure in mind before the first spadeful of earth is excavated for the foundation....It is a perfectly proper question to ask 'What does God plan for us?'

.....

After all, the only way in which we can know God's purposes is through the revelation He has made in His world and in human lives. .... Our doctrine of destiny, in so far as we are Christian, must harmonize with the spirit of the Christ. We know that here, under the leadership of Jesus, bad men are being changed into good men; sick and insane people are being restored to health and sanity; ignorant people are being taught the ways of wisdom. Scripture, experience and common sense all point to this as God's plan for the race. And since we know here that the health of no community is safe until all are free from disease, and that human rights and property are not fully secured anywhere until they are safeguarded everywhere, so we may know that in any universe where God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is a real ruler of mankind, none can be fully saved until all are saved. The real solidarity of the race can no longer be successfully controverted. We go up or down together....As men learn to cooperate with the Great Architect in completing His plans, God's glorious structure will at length be perfected.

'Evil shall die and every discord cease,  
And man shall walk with God in endless peace.'<sup>1</sup>

In his sermon on "The Rediscovery of Hell" Dr. Frank D. Adams says in closing:

"This is the hell which has been rediscovered. It is the pain, the punishment, the discipline, necessary to make the scales of equity balance. It has been established out of the mouth of three witnesses - faith, science and human experience. The old sulphurous, material flames have burnt out; but the fires of discipline and cleansing are still burning. They will continue to burn as long as men continue to sin and stumble and blunder on the way. The idea of a future, other-worldly, post mortem pit of torment is gone forever; but slowly and surely into the consciousness of the age in which we live is coming the recognition of that timeless law of perfect justice. It works now, here, in this world, and wherever life is found."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. B. G. Carpenter, pastor of the Universalist Church of Peoria, Illinois, constructed for the children of his church school a catechism, whose

1. p. 5-7

2. Rediscovered Countries, by Frank D. Adams, p. 103

teaching on the future is as follows:

"Question. What is death?

Answer. Death is the process by which the soul moves out of the body.

Q. What follows what we call death?

A. Continued progress.

Q. When is a soul saved?

A. A soul is saved when it is worth being saved.

Q. How is a soul made worth being saved?

A. A soul is made worth being saved by living life in terms of loving service."

A questionnaire sent out recently by the writer to a large group of Universalist ministers asked for their present views on sin, and on punishment. Only one of the men answering made any reference to the future.

He says:

"I conceive that one passes over the bridge of death carrying with him just what he had made of his life, its spiritual attainments. He is, of course, freed from fleshly appetites and passions. This may work a great change in what he may do hereafter. But he will have essentially the same spirit and attitude toward life as here. He will wake up just as he was. Here he must begin. If he has gained little or nothing of spiritual life here, he will have little to start with. We may say that each one goes to his own place that he has made for himself here. To my mind the next life will be one of endeavor as here; we may see more clearly what should be done; we may be freed from certain temptations; but it will be a moral world of choices; and men will be free there to choose the lower instead of the higher paths. Ultimately, under the law of spiritual gravitation, men will choose the right; but it may be after a further descent into evil. Its centrifugal force may drive men further from God; but His centripetal drawing will prevail in the end."

This group of opinions well expresses the enlightened opinion of future punishment among Universalists today. With many, however, the ideas of future punishment are vague, and very infrequently brought to the forefront of the mind, (perhaps only when some sinner who is much disliked dies).

This is due to the relatively infrequent reference to the subject, in pulpit,

church school, or press. There is no definite and understood teaching on future punishment, accepted by all as Universalist teaching.

#### Section B. Continuing Belief in No Future Punishment.

One has but to scratch the surface, so to speak, in any Universalist group, (at least in the rural midwestern parishes) to find stout believers in no future punishment.

Frequently is the Universalist minister appealed to thus: "I think we get all our punishment in this life, don't you?" It is always the same phrase.

One elderly lady of keen mind recently was induced to tell the writer her views on future punishment, and it was found that only within the last thirty years had she had any idea that Universalism implied future discipline even for the worst criminal. She has ever been a well-read Universalist.

A Universalist woman in another parish, when questioned, told her astonishment at the funeral service of her son, some years before. A Universalist preacher had been obtained, and at great cost and trouble. His sermon strangely lacked the promise of perfect and immediate bliss for all, which the parents were expecting, but their ears were grieved by talk of growth, learning, and doing, in the future life! That woman does not believe to this day in future punishment, though her present judgments on sinners are fearfully harsh.

Another good church member, in still another parish, in another state, quickly said, on being questioned, that if you were going to believe in future punishment, you might as well be orthodox and be done with it, for how could you be sure the punishment would ever stop, if it got started,



in the future life? She is another believer in no future punishment, apparently.

Her daughter told of a sermon preached in that church by one of its long-time pastors, on the text, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise". The sermon taught definitely the immediate exaltation of all men to the immortal and incorruptible and sinless state. That minister still lives, is in fact scarcely past sixty, and preaches funeral sermons for Universalists all over the state in which he resides. He undoubtedly preaches no future punishment either clearly or indirectly, in practically every funeral service. In him, indeed, the spirit of Hosea Ballou goes marching on.

#### Section C. Significance of the Period.

There is nothing noteworthy in all this twentyfive years, as regards ideas on future punishment, unless it be the ever decreasing interest in the whole subject, as each year goes by, resulting in the general unenlightenment of the laity on the matter.

## CHAPTER VII

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PERIOD FROM 1840-1925

Surveying now the whole period, which we have studied in small sections, we may well ask what have been its achievements as a whole. How far are we, in thought of future punishment, from the men and women of 1840?

## Section A. Changing Conceptions of the Future Life, 1840-1925

In 1840, most Universalists thought of the future life as a radically different existence from this. Now they think of the future life as almost the same as this, if they believe that there is such.

More specifically, Universalists then thought of all life as two separate static 'states', while now it is conceived as a long evolutionary process, with probably far more than two phases.

In accordance with these respective premises, Universalists then thought that this life was completed in itself,- now they think of this life as integrally bound up with the next. Then they thought of heaven as bliss- now they think of heaven as continuous growth and progress. Then most of them thought that bliss could enter a soul from without, that the vision of God, of Jesus, and of all the holy angels, would purify the blackest soul, supposing that the resurrection did not effect the change, as some claimed. Now practically all Universalists are well convinced that bliss is always, and primarily, internally conditioned, that salvation is not a matter of changing states, but a matter, simply, of moral and spiritual growth, here and hereafter.

### Section B. Changing Conceptions of Punishment, 1840-1925

In 1840, most Universalists were well familiarized with the ideas that punishment was remedial and consequential. To believe that it was remedial, that is, corrective, was a vital point of Universalism. Those who believed in present punishment only, were arguing that it was consequential. Probably many of the Restorationists had many shreds of the old ideas of penalty as something deserved, arranged, and applied from above. But they were in a hopeless minority, and doubtless many of them said they believed that punishment is naturally bound up with the sin.

Now, the remedial nature of punishment is still insisted on, by Universalists, in order to maintain the still central conviction, that all souls are saved at last. Now that we see how further sin may blind the sinner, it becomes necessary to argue that there is a limit beyond which the sinning man cannot go, - a point where the pain consequent upon the sinning becomes so severe, that that man will turn about and start back up the long road towards right and goodness again. Thus punishment is held to be remedial, ultimately, even in the most desperate cases, and to issue in reformation, not in moral torpor, nor in annihilation.

The consequential nature of punishment is far clearer today than it ever could have been to the Universalists of 1840, due to the greatly advanced knowledge of natural laws, and of the laws governing our lives, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, and social.

On the whole, Universalists of today are at one with the Universalists of 1840, in the faith that punishment is always remedial and always consequential.

### Section C. Changing Conceptions of Future Punishment, 1840-1925

We have seen that it is rather the changes in the concept of the future, than those, which are slight, in the concept of punishment, which have been the vital changes of the period.

The Universalists of 1840, in regard to future punishment, were united in their desire to find in death a swift end to all imperfections, limitations, pain and disappointment. They held the Christian hope of heaven, much as it had been held through all the ages. The end, not the process, - the goal, and not the running of the race, - the reward, and not the playing of the game, - interested them. Restorationists held that future discipline for the unbelievers was needed, and must be endured before the full goal was won, but all hearts were equally set on the goal.

Now, thoughtful Universalists reason thus in regard to future punishment:

Since this life and the future are essentially one, and

Since progress in this life is won partly (if not largely) by mistakes and wrongdoing, whose results are painful, but greatly increase our knowledge and wisdom,

Why not assume, in the lack of contrary knowledge, that much the same process of learning is going on in the future.

And, again,

Since our moral and spiritual condition on entering the future life is a far more determining and significant factor than whatever effect the dropping of the flesh, and the better environment, may have on us,

Is not the best way to prepare for the future the way of living

richly and nobly in the things of the mind and spirit, here?

Let us note, in conclusion, the steps by which such radical changes in the thought of future punishment came about.

1. The no future punishment and the Restorationist schemes were based on assumptions partly antiquated, and fast disappearing.
2. Both, however, continued long into the new period, and the no future punishment conception exists to this very day.
3. When the controversy was over, construction began. A plea soon appeared to the effect that a swift change was wrought by the heavenly uprising, if not an instantaneous.
4. Another theory arose, insisting on the moral connection of the next life with this, and shortly began to teach further progress and growth as a normal thing for all, in the future life.
5. The former idea, of swift change in the new life, died out as a separate movement, but seems to have bequeathed its best idea, its supreme idea, to the winning party, for we note that by 1878, the popular concept was of moral connection, with allowance for some beneficial effect of the loss of the flesh and of the new environment. The popular idea at this date carried the third thought, that at most there would be but small amounts of sorrow or discipline in the future.
6. The moral connection idea was the conquering one, and has continued down to the present, and has carried and further developed the idea of continuous progress, here and hereafter, which it originated. Now the thought of a favorable effect of the new environment, and the comforting thought of very little punishment, is fast passing out of mind, or has perhaps passed. The modern Universalist thought of future punishment is composed of two elements, - the moral connection of this life with the next, and continuous pro-

gress "onward and upward forever".

### CONCLUSION.

We have traced the denial of endless hell, on any or all grounds which then appeared tenable. We have noted the formation of a new denomination on the sole basis of the common conviction that all souls should be saved. We have studied the new and superseding theology which came in after the beginning of the nineteenth century, and became dominant. We have watched the founder of that theology develop a belief in no futurepunishment as a postulate, though not a necessary one, from the main lines of his system. We have seen how the rebellion of the more conservative of the Universalists against this development brought on controversy, ending in chaos, and no victory for either side. In the last period, of construction, we have traced the emergence and ultimate ascendancy of a view of future punishment which was not Restorationalism, but has its best point,— the moral connection of this life with the future. It has gotten this idea into a new setting, that of all life as progressive, continuous, and dynamic. We have seen that the results of the no futurepunishment teaching live yet, in such avoidance of the subject of future punishment as leaves the laymen in utter vagueness of mind, if not indeed, some of the ministry, besides having its outspoken advocates still living and serving the church.

Why did Universalists never build a definite doctrine, or at least a respected and established teaching, for all their members, on future punishment, to replace the hell they tore down? Because, as long as they were interested in the future specifically, they differed too much, and when they had at last ceased to differ radically, they had ceased to be interested, due to the lessening interest in the futurelife.



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